C0-CEL-506

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_C0-CEL-506

THE CENTURY
SHAKESPEARE

HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK

S.J.B. HAYDON, SCULPT. D.G. ROSSETTI, PINXT.

Hamlet and Ophelia

SHAKESPEARE

HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK

1908

CASSELL & Co LTD

LONDON, PARIS, NEW YORK
TORONTO & MELBOURNE

The frontispiece to this volume is taken from a hitherto unreproduced etching by Mr. S. J. B. Haydon, and is included herein by the kind permission of Mr. W. M. Rossetti, to whom grateful acknowledgment is here made.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	9
MAP (SHOWING SCENE OF PLAY)	30
TEXT	31
NOTES	211
GLOSSARY	217

INTRODUCTION

BY

F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.

ASSISTED BY JOHN MUNRO

HAMLET.—In his play of *Hamlet* Shakspere passes from the seven-hilld city, so long the empress of the world, from Rome, wherein the drama of the doom of the mightiest Cæsar has been acted, to "Denmarke, the whyche is a very poore countre, bare, and full of penurite,"[1] and yet a country which, like Rome, conquerd England. "The Danes hath bene good warryers, but for theyr poverte I do marueyle how they dyd get ones Englonde. They be subtyll-wytted, and they do proll muche about to get a prey." Of Elsinore, Miss Deedes says:—"Many a warm and starlight summer's eve have I passed sitting on the rocks, below the ramparts of the castle. Who could describe the perfection of such a scene and such a situation? The calm sea rippling at one's feet; opposite, the bright lights of the Swedish town; and nearer still the many-coloured lanterns of the numerous ships anchored and at rest for the night. Above, the shining stars, excelling in beauty, purity, and brightness all earthly lights; in one's ears the great silence of a summer's night, broken only by the musical whisper of the

[1] 1542. Andrew Boorde, p. 163 of my edition.

rippling waves, the chimes from the town, and the bells in the ships as the midnight hour draws near. Behind, the grim old walls, whereon it is not difficult to imagine that one sees the dark figures of Hamlet and his friends, and the shadowy vision of the ghost; or to fancy one's ear saluted with the 'Who goes there?' of the sentry, the wild pleading of Hamlet, and the sepulchral tones of his supernatural visitor." But it is on no sweet summer's eve that Shakspere, with his sense of nature's sympathy with man, has put his *Hamlet;* biting winter is the time for that. Let us first, tho', look at the links with *Julius Cæsar*, links of likeness as well as contrast. There are first, three mentions of Julius Cæsar in the play by Horatio, in I. i.; Polonius, in III. ii.; Hamlet, in V. i. Then 2, there is the burden of setting right the times out of joint, put as a duty on a student, a man who knows himself unfit for the burden, and who in bearing it brings death to himself and the woman who loves him, her mind giving way under the strain. 3. As Antony has to revenge his friend Cæsar's murder, so Hamlet and Laertes have to revenge their fathers' murders; and Laertes accepts his duty as willingly as Antony does. 4. A ghost appears in each play. 5. Antony's character of Brutus after death is like that of Hamlet's father. 6. Brutus's words to Messala in Act IV., sc. iii., of *Julius Cæsar* on Portia's death "we must die," "she must die once," are like Gertrude's and Claudius's to Hamlet on his father's death, "all that lives must die," etc. 7. Hamlet's making his speech of a dozen or sixteen lines the turning-point of his vengeance is like Brutus

and Antony both making their speeches the turning-point of their action. 8. Hamlet's feeling before his fencing-match is just like Cassius's and Brutus's before Philippi. 9. Hamlet loved plays, as Antony did, etc. Besides these are other small likenesses, as that of the oath taken by Hamlet's friends, and proposed to be taken by Brutus's; the murder of Claudius, the usurper of the crown, and the murder of Cæsar, the intending usurper; Hamlet reading a book and Brutus reading a book. The links of contrast: We have Hamlet with weakness of will, Brutus with weakness of judgment; Hamlet quick to resolve, but slow to act in his great duty, Brutus slow to resolve but quick to act; Hamlet a good shaper of means to end, Brutus a bad, always wrong in practice; Hamlet with no man but Horatio true to him, Brutus with no man ever false to him; Hamlet and his Ophelia to be pitied, Brutus and his Portia to be reverenced. The links with the Sonnets 66 and 90 are alluded to in the Introduction to the *Sonnets*. The strong ones with *Measure for Measure* are noted in the Introduction to that volume; this group of three plays—*Julius Cæsar*, *Hamlet*, and *Measure for Measure*—is firmly bound together. Of links with earlier plays we need only notice the Conscience-passage here and in *Richard III*. Hamlet's grand resolves and speeches with nothing coming of them, are just like Richard the Second's; and in many points Hamlet is close akin to Romeo. The motto which I would set at the head of *Hamlet* is three lines from Tennyson's "Supposed Confessions of a second-rate, sensitive

mind not in unity with itself." from his *Poems Chiefly Lyrical*, 1830:—

> "Oh weary life! oh weary death!
> Oh spirit and heart made desolate!
> Oh damnèd vacillating state."

In judging the character of Hamlet, and getting rid of the gross absurdity of representing him as a hero, a man of action and decision, whose hesitation was due only to want of conviction of his duty, we must look at the old story of the prose Hamlet of 1608,[1] and recollect that the Hamlet there was the unhesitating man of action. Though this story gave Shakspere the incidents of the murder of the father, the adulterous incest and subsequent marriage of the mother and uncle, the shamming madness of the son, with the method of it, "a greate and rare subtylte," the attempt to find out his secret by a "faere and beautifull" woman in a secret place, Hamlet's interview with his mother with some one listening behind the arras, the "a rat, a rat," the reproach of the mother by the son, the sending Hamlet to England with two

[1] Though this date of publication is five years later than that of the play, yet nearly all students allow that the piece here represents the old story that Shakspere used. It is printed in *Hazlitt*, Part I., vol. ii., pp. 224–279, and was englisht from Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* which was translated from the Italian of Bandello. That there was an earlier play of *Hamlet*, which Shakspere may have used, too, is certain. The first and spurious Quarto of Shakspere's play (which I believe to be his first sketch—see my Forewords to Griggs's Facsimile,—with patches by a botcher) was publisht in 1603; the second genuine one, the real *Hamlet*, containing most important passages not in the Folio, was issued in 1604; the third printed from Q. 2, in 1605; the fourth, printed from Q. 3, in 1611. The Folio text is from an altered copy of Q. 2. The first entry of the play on the Stationers' Registers is on July 26, 1602 by James Robertes: "A booke called The Revenge of Hamlet, Prince [of] Denmarke, as yt was latelie acted by the Lord Chamberlayne his servantes. . . .vjd." See Arber's *Transcript*, iii. 212.

of the murderer's ministers to be killd. and Hamlet's revenge on them, it yet brings Hamlet back after a year in England to sweep to his revenge, to make all the nobles who took part with his uncle drunk, and burn them in the wine-hall, and to cut his uncle's head clean off his shoulders. This man Shakspere resolvd to turn into the hesitating, philosophising, duty-shirking, excuse-seeking Hamlet he has given us, a type of the weakness of every one amongst us, as he changed the first queen's clear justification of herself, and her acting with Hamlet to accomplish his revenge, into the doubtful conduct of Gertrude; and the frank confession of the woman set to betray Hamlet, into the questionable sharing of Ophelia in her father's plans. The description above of Hamlet's home at Elsinore, his own account of his rides on the jester Yorick's back, of his noble father, of his mother's affection for him, show how happy the boy's home must have been, and how well he understood the beauty of this "brave o'erhanging firmament," and "what a piece of work is man! how noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving how express and admirable!" Traind he was in all exercises of arms and knightly deeds. "Out of Denmarke," says Andrew Boorde, "a man may go into Saxsony; the chefe cyte or town of Saxsony is Witzeburg, whych is a vnyuersite." Thither—to Luther's University—Hamlet went, surrounded by friends. The best fencer in the place, he delighted in the tragedians more than the humorous man and the clown, and, if we may believe Shakspere, was as good a critic of acting as Shakspere himself. These three years he has noted

the age. It is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe; and down the notes go in the student's tables, of those ills "that make calamity of so long life, the whips and scorn of time," etc. On this young university-man comes the terrible blow of his idolised father's death. I call him young, as his father does, as he himself, Polonius, Laertes, and Ophelia do too; for though he is thirty at the end of the few months of the play, yet he cannot be more than about twenty when the play begins.[1] He goes home, and with his mother, like Niobe all tears, follows his poor father's body to the grave. The election to the throne, not by the rabble, but no doubt by a council of the nobles, follows. Hamlet makes no sign; his uncle, whom he suspects of foul play, pops in between the election and his hopes. He still neither watches that uncle nor his mother. He grieves and meditates[2] and falls in love. He moons and spoons. His answer to his father shows what has engaged his thoughts, "with wings as swift as meditation or the thoughts of love."

[1] This inconsistency in Hamlet's age needn't trouble any one. It's just like the few days for 3 months in *The Merchant*, Desdemona speaking after she's stilled, Bohemia having a sea-coast in *Winter's Tale*, &c. &c. So long as Shakspere got his main point, his characters right, he didn't care twopence for accidentals.

[2] In a capital Paper, "The Case of Hamlet the Younger" (*Galaxy*, April, 1870), by my friend the late Richard Grant White, the same view of Hamlet that I take, was before taken. Mr. Hargrove too has, in his Lectures he says, often taken this view. Mr. Grant White so well says, p. 537, of Hamlet, "his was one of those natures into which *wrong enters like a thorn, to wound and rankle, not as a spur to rouse endeavour.*" But the "forbidding the chief actor not to mock Polonius" (p. 539) was of course ironical, like the traditional "don't duck him in the horsepond," "don't nail his ears to the post":—the latter, by the way, was the regular thieves' punishment: the culprit was given a knife, so that he might free himself by cutting his ear or a bit of it off, when he got tired of standing by his post. (Wittenberg was Luther's university, and on its church, Oct. 31, 1517, he stuck his 95 Theses.)

In his "weakness and his melancholy" he is alone, and throws himself on Ophelia's bosom. His mother has sought her comfort too, and married her seducer within a month of her first and noble husband's death. This second blow crushes Hamlet's already downcast spirit. His impulse is to run away, to go back to school in Wittemberg, to friends, tragedians, and notebooks. But weak and melancholy, he weakly gives way to the asking of the mother he despises, and stays at court, but still with no thought of action; all he desires is, to evaporate, or if he had the pluck or want of conscience, to kill himself. Does not one want a Friar Laurence to cry out as to Romeo, "Art thou a man? thy tears are womanish! why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven and earth? thy noble shape is but a form of wax, digressing from the valour of a man!" One must insist on this, that before any revelation of his father's murder is made to Hamlet, before any burden of revenging that murder is laid upon him, he thinks of suicide as a welcome means of escape from this fair world of God's, made abominable to his diseasd and weak imagination by his mother's lust, and the dishonour done by her to his father's memory. This is the first, as it will be hereafter the main thing in his thoughts, this the act which he will first revenge, and with a will, leaving the vengeance for the murder of his father to the framing of that Providence who "shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will," and who turns the poisond point meant by the murderer for Hamlet's own bosom, into that murderer's breast. While Hamlet waits for his father's ghost, he explains to us his own character. He carries

the stamp of one defect, weakness of will, which doubts the noble substance of his nature to his own scandal; and twice again during the play Shakspere reads for us the riddle of his hero's character, in the Player-king's speech on Purpose, and Claudius's on Prompt Action to Laertes. The terrible secret of his father's murder is reveald to Hamlet; and he swears he'll sweep to his revenge. Is he apt to do so, or duller than the fat weed that rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf? Surely the latter. For what does Hamlet do? He denounces first his mother (she's uppermost in his thoughts), second his uncle, third he makes an entry in his tables,[1] fourth he gets hysterical, laughs and jokes, and says he'll go pray, fifth he frames a plan of shamming madness, and swears his friends not to reveal its cause[2]; sixth, he laments that the burden of revenge which he has just so wholly accepted is put on him. Surely the queen might have commented on his answer to his father with "the gentleman doth protest too much, methinks," and surely he, instead of cursing spite, might have recollected with Helena—

> "The fated sky
> Gives us free scope; only doth backward pull
> Our slow designs, when we ourselves are dull."

We know well how all Scandinavian legend and history are full of the duty of revenge for a father's

[1] See a copy of the note-book Shakspere meant in the *Writing Tables*, &c., 1581, in the British Museum.

[2] Notwithstanding this, the latest notion with some Americans who ought to know better, is to take up Werder's craze that the cause of Hamlet's delay in killing Claudius was his having to wait till he had convinced the Danes of the king's guilt.

murder. We know what Hamlet should have done to sweep to his revenge. The king tells us, Laertes shows us. Hamlet's own reflection on the peasant and courtier, the queen's "you false Danish dogs," the king's precautions, Laertes's example, all show us how Hamlet, greatly loved by the people, with his friend Horatio more an antique Roman than a Dane, and Marcellus, could have raised the country in a few days, and dethroned Claudius. But that was not the character Shakspere meant to draw. Instead of that, instead of the warrior king's son, in his righteous wrath, sweeping to his revenge, we have the picture of him that Ophelia's exaggeration limns:—

> "Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
> And with a look so piteous in purport,
> As if he had been loosed out of hell."

He has sought her to look through her, after Cæsar's manner, and see whether she is true to him. He seeks her help; the man who should be strong, from the woman who is weak. But there is no Juliet, Portia, Viola, Helena, Isabella, to rise in the strength of woman's love, in the readiness of woman's wit, and string again the unstrung mind,[1] re-nerve the unnerved

[1] This is all towards Hamlet's fancied madness that I can admit. The mad theory Shakspere has answerd himself. He has shown us who held it, the old fool and the women. And he has also shown us who didn't hold it, the man with a head on his shoulders, Claudius. I accept Shakspere's judgment, mad doctors and Co. notwithstanding. Mr. Grant White says, p. 39: "Indeed, he accused himself of insanity to divers persons until almost the day of his death; a sure evidence, if they had but known it, that he was not mad; and, indeed, so weak was his purpose that he confessed with particularity to Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, as well as to Horatio and to his mother, that he was feigning madness for a purpose. He was too weak and incontinent of soul even to keep his own great secret, but went about making others swear that they would keep it for him." My friend Mr. Hargrove presses the *hysteria* on me, from certain experiences of his own. He says too, "It is not Hamlet's *mind* that is unstrung, but his nerves,

hand; no Lady Macbeth to tower over this man's irresolution and become for a while the mistress of his destiny. He has chosen her whose name is Help, but he has chosen wrongly, and help from her comes none. His is the blame, not hers. Mother and love have faild him, but his books are left, and to them he turns. "Look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading." Still, neither his troubles nor his books have taken the tang out of his tongue, and his sarcasms convince Polonius that though this be madness, yet there's method in it. Then come the players; and the genuine emotion shown by the reciter, reveals to Hamlet "what a rogue and peasant slave he is, a dull and muddy-metalled rascal, [illegible] and an ass, that he, the son of a dear father murderd, prompted to his revenge by heaven and hell, must, like a whore, unpack his heart with words." Surely every epithet he here applies to himself is richly deservd. What is the use of his "words, words, words," and such lots of tall ones, when all one wants of him is one act? Then at the end of his big talk comes "about my brains," to frame that paltry excuse for delay, delay: "the spirit may be a devil." Where is Friar Laurence again, with his "Art thou a man?" Then comes the second great suicide and world-evil soliloquy which was sumd up in my Tennyson motto for the play, and which Sonnets 66 and 90 re-echo. The two —this speech and the former suicide one—should be carefully compared.

and the wild behaviour after the Ghost-scene and Play-scene is simply so much escape of accumulated nervous force. I cannot think any account of Hamlet complete which does not bring in the word *hysteria* or 'hysterical.'"

In the second, the incestuous love of Hamlet's mother as the cause of his life-weariness, has given place to the general evils of the world. His reason for not killing himself is no longer God's canon against self-slaughter, but that the dread of something after death puzzles the will. And then he degrades conscience[1] into identity with this same dread, and seems to offer it as his excuse for letting his resolution to sweep to his revenge, "lose the name of action." This is a mere subterfuge and bit of self-deceit. He will not fight because he may have bad dreams. He will not kill himself because he's afraid of something after death. He has neither Macbeth's pluck to jump the life to come, nor MacMahon's "J'y suis, j'y reste,"[2] using gun and sword the while. In his second interview with Ophelia, he turns to her at first with gentle words and affection. These are curdled into bitterness and brutality by her offer to return his gifts, not by his fancied seeing of her father behind the arras; for there is no trace in the play of any change of tone after he's askt her about Polonius; nothing like his Guildenstern and Rosencrantz taunt "'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?" He harps still on Ophelia's marriage, and the harlot's face-painting, (so often scolded by Shakspere,) tricks and wantonness. He developes his first "bawd" hint, seeing Ophelia through Gertrude's lust, and says no word of her lie and treachery to him which he is supposed to have just discoverd. Then he turns stage-manager or elocution-master for a while. Isn't there

[1] See the text as against the meaning ordinarily given to the word and passage.

[2] In the Redan at the siege of Sebastopol.

something childish in this, just like his boyish glee at the success of his play-stratagem? Is he not a pipe for fortune's, nay, whim's finger, to sound what stops she pleases? Well, the play succeeds; the king's guilt is unkenneld. Hamlet is sure that his uncle was his father's murderer. Why then didn't he stab Claudius as he fled convicted, conscience-stricken, before his whole court? Still, of course, Hamlet sweeps to his revenge directly after! Oh, no. He quotes two little bits of poetry, chuckles over the success of his stratagem, and calls for a tune. He's acted enough for the present, and can chaff his father's murderer. The killing of him can stand over; no hurry about that: "most lame and impotent conclusion." Still there is one thing that Hamlet really wants to do: convict his mother of her baseness. She gives him the opportunity, and after a brilliantly sarcastic exposure of his innocently[1] treacherous friends, he at once seizes the chance; but first he must have some more tall words, must lash himself up to act, and indulge in some more self-deception:—

> "Now could I drink hot blood,
> And do such bitter business as the day
> Would quake to look on."

Of course "the poor wretch" could no more do it than fly over the moon; but big words are a relief to such weak creatures. On his road to his mother he finds the king at that pathetic prayer of his, the most touching piece in the play, and has an easy chance

[1] I suppose Claudius used Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as Polonius used Ophelia.

of performing his vow. He will do it; but then he thinks, and then he won't do it. His former uncertainties about heaven and hell have been cleard up, he knows all about the conditions of entry to both, and if he kills the murderer on his knees he'll send him to heaven.[1] So, to avoid this, he keeps him for hell: a mere excuse, of course, for delay. His mind is full of his mother. This duty of revenge is a bore to him, and has almost died out of his mind; any excuse will do to be rid of it. If he could but get over it by accident now, what a blessing it would be! He hopes he has done so, but his victim is Polonius, and he considers the poor old man just a nuisance happily got out of the way.[2] Note the almost brutal words in which he talks of Polonius afterwards, and the delightfully cool and self-deceiving way in which he puts the blame of his rash murder of Polonius on Heaven:—

> "But heaven hath pleased it so,
> To punish me with this, and this with me,
> That I must be their scourge and minister."

Still, Hamlet with his mother, is Hamlet in his nobleness and strength. Her disgraceful adultery and incest, and treason to his noble father's memory, Hamlet has felt in his inmost soul. Compared to their ingrain die, Claudius's murder of his father—notwithstanding all his protestations—is only a skin-deep stain. And against his mother and her sin all

[1] The theory that this was a genuine excuse, is answerd by Laertes saying that he'd cut the throat of *his* father's murderer in the church.

[2] Compare the same feeling in Hamlet's remonstrance with Laertes in Ophelia's grave (V. i. p. 191), "What is the reason that you vex me thus? I loved you ever." 'I've only killed your father. You really shouldn't be put out about a trifle like that. It's unreasonable.'

the magnificent indignation of his purity and virtue speak. We forget his blood-staind hands in the white-heat intensity of his words. While thus gratifying his own impulse—righteous though it be—his father's ghost comes again, to remind him of his first, though his oft-forsaken, duty, and to shield the now-suffering wife that he, the ghost, when in the flesh, had loved with such sweet fond love. The latter purpose of the ghost Hamlet carries out; he changes his tone to his mother, tells her what he'd have her do, abstain from his uncle's bed (which she evidently doesn't do), gets her to promise secrecy to him—a promise that she keeps—and trusts her with his resolve to countermine Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's supposed treacherous schemes[1] against him. Result: mother and son are at one again, and remain so. Hamlet has resolvd to take revenge on two men who he thinks have betrayd him. Perhaps that'll train him to revenge his father's murder, after his fresh declaration that that father's "form and cause conjoind, preaching to stones, would make them capable." Yes, stones, but not Hamlet.[2]

[1] The complicity of his school-fellows in the king's plan is hardly possible. Claudius was not the man to let his scheme ooze out into the sponges he used. He'd not show them the message they carried, before he seald it.

[2] After having put forward my views of *Hamlet* in 1877 I was glad to find, Dec. 21, 1880, that Coleridge took in 1812 the view that I do: see the report of his 12th Lecture on Shakspere in J. P. Collier's *Seven Lectures on Shakspere and Milton by S. T. C.* (1856) p. 143:—"The poet places him [Hamlet] in the most stimulating circumstances that a human being can be placed in. He is the heir apparent of a throne; his father dies suspiciously; his mother excludes her son from his throne by marrying his uncle. This is not enough; but the ghost of the murder'd father is introduced to assure the son that he was put to death by his own brother. What is the effect upon the son? Instant action and pursuit of revenge? No: endless reasoning and hesitating—constant urging and solicitations of the mind to act, and as constant

After fresh sarcasms against those "sponges," Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and grimly humorous sayings over poor Polonius's corpse, Hamlet, unworthy son of gallant father, sees young Fortinbras, worthy son of worthy father, marching for honour's sake against Poland; and now Hamlet looks himself once more fairly in the face, as to his breach of duty, his want of real love to his father. His indignation against his mother's want of love to that father he has given vent to. Now, perhaps, he can clearly see his own want of love to that father, his failure in duty towards him. He does see it. He owns, in the fine speech that's only in Quarto 2, that he has "cause, and will,[1] and strength, and means" to do his duty. And still what is his conclusion? Deeds? No; words again:—

> "Oh from this time forth,
> My *thoughts* be bloody, or be nothing worth."—
> (In Quarto 2 only.)

Well, Hamlet sets sail for England. He believes his two school fellows are in a plot to murder him; and of course they need different treatment at his hands from the man who murdered his father; his vengeance on them—their punishment—must not be put off; so he cleverly makes their death safe forthwith, and finds out the king's villainous plot against himself. Will this fresh personal wrong make Hamlet "sweep

an escape from action; ceaseless reproaches of himself for sloth and negligence, while the whole energy of his resolution evaporates in these reproaches. This, too, not from cowardice, for he is drawn as one of the bravest of his time—not from want of forethought or slowness of apprehension, for he sees through the very souls of all who surround him—but merely from that aversion to action which prevails among such as have a world in themselves."

[1] That is, Hamletian will, in words.

to his revenge" at his first fresh chance? We shall see. A pirate chases them. Hamlet shows the old Viking blood and is taken prisoner. His captors land him in Denmark; he sends for Horatio, and says "to-morrow" he'll see the king. He seems to put off "to-morrow," and, evidently before going to court, strolls into a graveyard, and, after his old manner, moralises on what he sees there. Then comes the knowledge that Ophelia is dead, and his ranting outburst about his love for her. Can we believe it genuine? Surely not to anything like the extent he professes. No doubt he had loved her more than Laertes had. But his frothy speech shows how little solid love there was underneath it. Next we have Hamlet's talk with Horatio about carrying out his long-deferred vengeance on Claudius, his conviction that the time for its being done is short, but that the "interim" is his. Polonius, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Ophelia—all who plotted against him—are by his means dead. When is the other, Claudius, his father's murderer, to follow too? Still he forms no plan; still he leaves the performance of his duty to chance or Providence. And it is Claudius, not Hamlet, that plans the plot for his own death. To Hamlet, anything, any amusement that'll delay the fulfilment of his vow, is still welcome. He can indulge in his old sarcasms, undertake a fencing match to please the man he thinks he means to kill. Yet a shadow of coming ill is on him; a feeling of fatalism comes over him; "the readiness is all." But is he ready? Yes, to give his life, to give his life, which has been long his burden, much more willingly out of the way of duty than in it.

We are glad that he asks Laertes's pardon, sorry that he makes a lying excuse for his rudeness to him. And then this "brother's wager" is playd. The erring queen dies first, poisond by her guilty husband's means. Hamlet learns that he has not half an hour to live; and then at last does "sweep to his revenge," and sends his father's murderer to hell. Laertes reaps the due reward of his treachery, though asking and getting Hamlet's forgiveness. Hamlet lives to save Horatio from the death his friendship prompts him to share with his friend; to point out a fitter successor to the throne than ever he himself could have made; and then, with all his failings and all his virtues, dies. In death he's done his duty; and nothing but that could have made him do it. Still tho', "incestuous" comes before "murderous," as he denounces Claudius; and it's "Follow my mother," not "my father," it's "Wretched queen, adieu!" "Horatio, report me and my cause aright," with no mention of his father, though Laertes had just named his. And Horatio, who is honest, put forth no such defence for his friend as Hamlet's modern admirers do: he speaks only of, "in this upshot, purposes mistook, fallen on the inventors' heads." The folk who admit no imperfection in Hamlet, first pity him—as we all must—then they love him, and then they glorify him. But, admitting his claims on our pity, on our admiration, for his brilliant intellectual gifts—penetration, wit, humour, sarcasm, reflection—his courage and his virtues, we must find him "infirm of purpose:" "unstable as water, he shall not excel." In his diseasd view of the beauties of God's earth and its inhabitants, and of life;

his shirkings of duty, his putting-off, his making grand subterfuge-full excuses for them; in his uncertainties about the mystery of death and the future world, Hamlet but typifies each one of us, at some time or other of our lives. Who is there of us that has not known that "weary life," that "weary death," that "damnèd vacillating state"? And this is the secret of the attraction of Hamlet over us. "Is there any other man in Shakspere whom we feel such a longing to comfort?" askt the bonniest and handsomest girl I ever lectured to. ("Pite rennith soone in gentil herte.") But, while willing to sympathise to any extent in his weakness (which is my own), and in the ruin of his love, his nature and his hope, I hold that what Hamlet wanted, was some of the Ulysses will:—

> "That which we are, we are
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but *strong in will*
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

I hold too that "nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it" (*Macbeth*, I. iv.), for that involved the doing of his duty. Under the burden of that, his unfit nature sank.

"Hamlet is," says Mr. Munro, "a familiar figure in the legends of Denmark, but the Hamlet of the legends is a vastly different individual to the Hamlet of the play.[1]

[1] "His [Shakspere's] Hamlet was a sentimental, philosophical young fellow, a Protestant, who has gone through the University at Wittenberg, who is a refined scholar and an accomplished critic, but who lacks the wit and the daring to avenge his father's death. There is nothing in him of the spirit and the roughness of the young man of the heroic age; he is not in any sense the man who wore that name in the sixth century, and whose whole life was a succession of personal encounters, wherein might was the sole arbiter of right. The Hamlet

His history was written by the famous Saxo Grammaticus in his *Historia Danica*, and the story passed into the literatures of other European lands. Prof. Schick indeed, has found parallels to the story in various Asiatic countries, and it may be that *Hamlet*, like part of *Romeo and Juliet*, may be thought eventually to have had its beginnings in Asiatic tales. For considerations of this point, however, we must wait for Prof. Schick's book. Belleforest, at any rate, borrowd the story through Bandello from Saxo, and gives it a most barbarous version, in the fifth volume of his *Histoires Tragiques*, 1570. Early in the seventeenth century appeard an English translation of Belleforest's work, but this probably owd more to Shakspere than Shakspere owd to it; and it cannot be said for certain whether our poet consulted Belleforest's book, or not. More certain it is, however, that Shakspere used for the basis of his play some older and lost play of *Hamlet*, the subject being already well known on the English stage. It is inferrd that Kyd, the author of the *Spanish Tragedy*, was the author of this earlier play, principally because of the resemblance between the *Spanish Tragedy* and *Hamlet*, because Thomas Nash in a short review of the literature of his time in Greene's *Menaphon* (1589) refers to one who leaves his trade of *Noverint* (*i.e.* attorney, and such probably was

of history lived in an age when the warlike teachings of Odin were universally accepted in forming the character of the men. It was then understood that personal courage and physical strength, united with clear judgment, were necessary to win distinction. The Scandinavian mythology is filled with this idea, and the whole history of the heroic age, long before the introduction of Christianity, informs us that knowledge which was then called cunning, was greatly venerated."—*Legend of Hamlet* by Geo. P. Hansen, 1887, pp. 10-11.

Kyd's father), and "will afoord you whole *Hamlets*," and because Nash describes this lost play as Senecan, while Kyd translated from French Garnier's Senecan drama, *Cornelia*.

"Be that as it may, the first edition, proper, of Shakspere's *Hamlet* was publisht in 1604. But before that, in 1603, a most mysterious production was issued from the press: "The | Tragicall Historie of | Hamlet | *Prince of* Denmarke | By William Shake-speare | as it hath been diuerse times acted by his Highnesse ser- | uants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two V- | niuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where | At London printed for N[icholas] L[ing] and Iohn Trundell | 1603." Two copies of this are known, one without the title-page, in the British Museum, and another in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. This text is in every way inferior to the text of 1604[1]; it is much shorter and corrupt, many of its lines are nothing but arrant dribble, and it differs in names from the later Quarto. It is held by some critics to be a partially revised text, piratically publisht, of such an earlier play as we have before mentioned,[2] the completer revision being publisht in 1604.[3] Further Quartos, based on that of 1604,

[1] The Quarto of 1604, indeed, is adver'ised on the title-page as "Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie,"—a statement which supports the conclusion that the edition of 1603 was piratical. Even the 1604 Quarto, in spite of the above statement, was made from an acting version.—M.

[2] But see my forewords to the Facsimile of this First Quarto, published by B. Quaritch.—F.

[3] The second Quarto was printed by W. Gr'ggs under the direction of Dr. Furnivall as No. 2 of the *Shakspere Quarto Facsimiles*. Parallel texts of the first two Quartos were edited by Mr. S. Timmins in 1860. *The Devonshire Hamlets* and parallel texts of these Quartos again with the first Folio were edited by W. Vietor, Marburg, 1891. The Quartos and Folio have also been printed in parallel volumes in America.—M.

followd in 1605, etc., and the Folio text was publisht in 1623. The Folio is more accurately printed than the Quartos, and altho', on the whole, not so valuable as the second Quarto, contains passages which this latter does not give, notably Hamlet's talk with Rosencrantz about the eyrie of little children who had become the fashion on the common stage (II. ii., p. 93) and his words with Horatio (V. ii., p. 195) about his father's murderer and his grief for forgetting himself to Laertes. The modern text is a composite one, made of all the best readings; it is the nearest thing we can get to what the poet himself must have written.

On the name Polonius,[1] Prof. Gollancz has some interesting remarks in the "Proceedings of the British Academy," 1903-4, pp. 199-291. He says: "Shakespeare created the name 'Polonius,' with special reference to the ideal 'Counsellor,' as depicted in a work famous throughout Europe, *De Optimo Senatore* (Venice, 1568), written by Laurentius Grimalius Goslicius, perhaps the greatest Polish statesman of the time. An interesting reference to the work (the author's name being anglicised as Grimaldus) is to be found in Gabriel Harvey's *Pierces Supererogation* (1593). An English translation appeared in 1598, the very year that Burleigh died, with a long descriptive title, setting forth the contents of the book," which was "consecrated to the honour of the Polonian empire." A second edition appeared in 1604, and another version and an abridgment followed. Prof.

1 It was Corambis or Corambus in the first Quarto, which Prof. Gollancz says was merely a variant of "Old Crambo," and probably suggestive of Burleigh.

Gollancz thinks that "some of Hamlet's noblest utterances sound like echoes from passages in the book."

"The seasons in *Hamlet*," says Ellacombe (*New Shaks. Soc. Trans.*, 1880–6, p. 74), "are distinctly marked by the flowers. Act I. takes place in winter or early spring. Ophelia's madness must be placed in early summer." The time of the play is seven days represented on the stage—or eight if the reader prefers to assign a separate day to the last scene—with two intervals (Daniel, *New Shaks. Soc. Trans.*, 1877–9, p. 214).

A MAP

SHOWING THE SCENE OF THE PLAY

HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark.*
HAMLET, *Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King.*
HORATIO, *Friend to Hamlet.*
POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*
LAERTES, *his Son.*
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, OSRIC, *A Gentleman,* } *Courtiers.*
A Priest.
MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, } *Officers.*
FRANCISCO, *A Soldier.*
REYNALDO, *Servant to Polonius.*
A Captain.
English Ambassadors.
Ghost of Hamlet's Father.
FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway.*
Players.
Two Clowns, Grave-diggers.

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark, and Mother to Hamlet.*
OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polonius.*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and Attendants.

SCENE—ELSINORE; *except in the fourth scene of the fifth act, where it is a* PLAIN IN DENMARK

SCENE I.—Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle

FRANCISCO, *a sentinel.* BERNARDO *enters to relieve him*

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold your self.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'T is now struck twelve: get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 't is bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them.—Stand! Who's there?

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier: who hath relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place. Give you good night. [*Exit.*

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,—
What! is Horatio there?
Hor. A piece of him.
Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.
Mar. What, has this thing appeared again tonight?
Ber. I have seen nothing.
Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us,—
Therefore, I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.
Hor. Tush, tush! 't will not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile,
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.
Hor. Well, sit we down
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven

Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

Enter Ghost

Mar. Peace! break thee off: look, where it comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like!—It harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by Heaven I charge thee, speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away!

Hor. Stay! speak, speak, I charge thee, speak! [*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'T is gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on 't?
Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.
Mar. Is it not like the king?
Hor. As thou art to thyself.
Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated.
So frowned he once when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'T is strange!
Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war?
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task

Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?
Who is't that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteemed him—
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a sealed compact
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit with his life all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gagéd by our king, which had returned
To the inheritance of Fortinbras
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant
And carriage of the article designed,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimprovéd mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,

Sharked up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in 't, which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think, it be no other, but e'en so:
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armèd through our watch, so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets,
As stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events—
As harbingers preceding still the fates,

And prologue to the omen coming on—
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—

Re-enter Ghost

But, soft! behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion,
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me!
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me!
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*The cock crows.*
Speak of it, stay, and speak!—Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?
Hor. Do, if it will not stand.
Ber. 'T is here!
Hor. 'T is here!
Mar. 'T is gone! [*Exit Ghost.*
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine; and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most convenient.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—The Same. A Room of State

Flourish. Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, *Lords, and Attendants*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore, our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy,—
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barred

Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along: for all, our thanks.
Now follows that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is. We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject: and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow.
Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor., Vol. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane
And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition; and, at last,

Upon his will I sealed my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.
King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will.—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—
Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.
King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?
Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.
Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailéd lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st, 't is common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.
Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.
Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?
Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems.'
'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly : these, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play :
But I have that within, which passeth show ;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'T is sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father :
But you must know your father lost a father ;
That father lost, lost his ; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow : but to persever
In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness ; 't is unmanly grief ;
It shows a will most incorrect to Heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschooled :
For what we know must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart ? Fie ! 't is a fault to Heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,

'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 't is a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish. Exeunt all, but* HAMLET.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would
melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew;
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on 't! Ah fie! 't is an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in
nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead, — nay, not so much, not
two!
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on
him
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month, —
Let me not think on 't, — Frailty, thy name is
woman! —
A little month; or e'er those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears; — why she, even she —
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,

Would have mourn'd longer — married with my uncle;
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules; within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galléd eyes,
She married:—O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good:
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS *and* BERNARDO

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you.
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you.—[*To* BERNARDO.] Good even, sir.—
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We 'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio!—
My father,—methinks I see my father—

Hor. O, where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.—

Hor. I saw him once: he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw, who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encountered: a figure like your father,
Arméd at point, exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walked
By their oppressed and fear-surpriséd eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distilled
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had delivered, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father:
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watched.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none; yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanished from our sight.

Ham. 'T is very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honoured lord, 't is true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar., Ber. We do, my lord.

Ham. Armed, say you?

Mar., Ber. Armed, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar., Ber. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then, saw you not his face?

Hor. O! yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, looked he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fixed his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stayed it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar., Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw 't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silvered.

Ham. I will watch to-night:
Perchance, 't will walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves; as mine to you: Farewell.

[*Exeunt* Horatio, Marcellus, *and* Bernardo.

My father's spirit—in arms ;—all is not well ;
I doubt some foul play : 'would, the night were
come !
Till then, sit still, my soul.—Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's
eyes. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—A Room in the House of Polonius

Enter Laertes *and* Ophelia

Laer. My necessaries are embarked : farewell ;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.
Oph. Do you doubt that ?
Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;
No more.
Oph. No more but so ?
Laer. Think it no more.
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk ; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now ;

And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then, if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he, in his particular act and place,
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmastered importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon;
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes;
The canker galls the infants of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed:

And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long,—but here my father comes:

Enter POLONIUS

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes? aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for. There,—my blessing with thee;
[*Laying his hand on* LAERTES' *head.*
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear 't that the opposéd may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous chief in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all,—to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you: go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'T is in my memory locked,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'T is told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so, (as so 't is put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? pooh! you speak like a green girl
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I 'll teach you: think yourself a baby;

That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly ;
Or, not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus, you 'll tender me a fool.
Oph. My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.
Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it ; go to, go to.
Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.
Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows : these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise as it is a-making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence :
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young ;
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows ; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,

But mere implorators of unholy suits
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds
The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to 't, I charge you: come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—The Platform

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, *and* Marcellus

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: it then draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels,

And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a custom?
Ham. Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honoured in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel, east and west
Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes
From our achievements, though performed at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin,)
By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners;—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—
Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,

Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance often dout
To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost

Hor. Look, my lord! it comes.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us:—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O answer me,
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell,
Why thy canónised bones, hearséd in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urned,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?

Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we
do? [*The Ghost beckons Hamlet.*
Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.
Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removéd ground:
But do not go with it.
Hor. No, by no means.
Ham. It will not speak: then will I follow
it.
Hor. Do not, my lord.
Ham. Why, what should be the
fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again:—I 'll follow it.
Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain

That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still:—go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be ruled; you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve.—
[*The Ghost beckons.*
Still am I called.—Unhand me, gentlemen,—
[*Breaking from them.*
By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:—
I say, away!——Go on, I'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt Ghost and* HAMLET.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 't is not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—A more remote Part of the Platform

Enter Ghost and HAMLET

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word

Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combinéd locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine ;
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list !—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

Ham. O God !

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder ?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this, most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt :
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear.
'T is given out, that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forgéd process of my death

Rankly abused ; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul !
My uncle !

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce !—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage ; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine !
But virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel linked,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed
And prey on garbage.
But, soft ! methinks, I scent the morning air :
Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of curséd hebenon in a vial,

And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine ;
And a most instant tetter barked about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, and queen, at once despatched ;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head :
O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most horrible !
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incést.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught : leave her to Heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,

And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:
Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth!—What else?
And shall I couple hell? O fie!—Hold, hold, my heart,
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter: yes, by Heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damnéd villain!
My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:
[*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is, 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'
I have sworn 't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord! my lord!

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!
Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!
Mar. [*Within.*] So be it!
Hor. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No; you will reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by Heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?—
But you'll be secret?
Hor., Mar. Ay, by Heaven, my lord.
Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.
Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:

You, as your business and desire shall point you,
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is; and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, 'faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Hor., Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. In deed, upon my sword, in deed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—

Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground.—

Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?

A worthy pioner!—Once more remove, good friends

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come;—
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,—
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antick disposition on,—
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumbered thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, 'Well, well, we know;'—or, 'We could, an if we would;'—
Or, 'If we list to speak;'—or, 'There be, an if they might;'—
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me:—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbèd spirit!—So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do to express his love and friending to you,

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint: O curséd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let 's go together. [*Exeunt.*

Scene I.—A Room in the House of Polonius

Enter Polonius *and* Reynaldo

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,

What company, at what expense; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 't were, some distant knowledge of him,
As thus,—'I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him:'—do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. '—and, in part, him; but,' you may say, 'not well:
But if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so;'—and there put on him
What forgeries you please,—marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him: take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,
Quarrelling, drabbing: you may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency ;
That 's not my meaning : but breathe his faults so quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaiméd blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord,—

Pol. Wherefore should you do this ?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here 's my drift ;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant ;
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 't were a thing a little soiled i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured,
He closes with you in this consequence :—
'Good sir,' or so ; or 'friend,' or 'gentleman,'—
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country—

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—he does—

What was I about to say?—By the mass, I was
About to say something:—where did I leave?
Rey. At 'closes in the consequence,'
At 'friend or so,' and 'gentleman.'
Pol. At 'closes in the consequence,'—ay, marry:
He closes with you thus;—'I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then, with such or such, and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in 's rouse;
There falling out at tennis; or, perchance,
'I saw him enter such a house of sale,'
Videlicet, a brothel,—or so forth.—
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlases and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out:
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?
Rey. My lord, I have.
Pol. God be wi' ye; fare ye well.
Rey. Good my lord!
Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.
Rey. I shall, my lord.
Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.
Pol. Farewell! [*Exit* REYNALDO.

Enter OPHELIA

How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?
Oph. Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
Pol. With what, i' the name of God?
Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings fouled,
Ungartered, and down-gyvéd to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been looséd out of hell
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.
Pol. Mad for thy love?
Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.
Pol. What said he?
Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stayed he so:
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go :
And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes ;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And to the last bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me : I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry—
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord ; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.—
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him : I feared he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee ; but, beshrew my jealousy !
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions

As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known, which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.
Come. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—A Room in the Castle

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern *and Attendants*

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since not the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him
And since so neighboured to his youth and humour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court

Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasions you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, opened, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of you;

And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our services freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz:

And I beseech you instantly to visit

My too much changéd son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, Amen!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and some Attendants.*

Enter POLONIUS

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully returned.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think—or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do—that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O! speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.— [*Exit* POLONIUS.
He tells me, my sweet queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.
Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main,—
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.
King. Well, we shall sift him.—

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS

Welcome, my good friends.
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?
Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appeared
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,
But, better looked into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give th' assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,

And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Giving a paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And, at our more considered time, we 'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business:
Meantime, we thank you for your well-took labour.
Go to your rest; at night we 'll feast together:
Most welcome home!
[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

Pol. This business is well ended.—
My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity's the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,

What is 't, but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 't is true: 't is true 't is pity;
And pity 't is 't is true.—A foolish figure:
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus
Perpend.
I have a daughter; have, whilst she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise:
—'To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,'—
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase: 'beautified' is a vile phrase; but you shall hear.—Thus:

'In her excellent-white bosom, these,' &c.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.—

[*Reads.*] 'Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt, that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt, I love.

'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers, I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O, most best, believe it. Adieu.

'Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET.'

This in obedience hath my daughter showed me;
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Received his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,—what might you,
Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think,
If I had played the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb;
Or looked upon this love with idle sight:
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
'Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star;

This must not be:' and then I precepts gave
her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulséd,—a short tale to make,—
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 't is this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know
that,
That I have positively said, ''T is so,'
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. [*Pointing to his head and body.*] Take
this from this, if this be otherwise.
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours
together
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away! I do beseech you, both away:
I'll board him presently:—O! give me leave.—

[*Exeunt* KING, QUEEN, *and Attendants.*

Enter HAMLET, *reading*

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir: to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead

dog, being a god kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive. —Friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that?—[*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love: very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical slave says here, that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am: if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there's

method in 't.—Will you walk out o' the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—[*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. [*To* POLONIUS.] God save you, sir! [*Exit* POLONIUS.

Guil. Mine honoured lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy; On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? O! most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord?

Ham. Denmark 's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 't is none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros., Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a

free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour; I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no.

Ros. What say you?

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory;

this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appeareth no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me;—no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, man delights not me?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you; we coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his Majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere; and the

lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an eyrie of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are not better—their writers do them wrong,

to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come, then; the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony; let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward should more appear like entertainment than yours.

You are welcome; but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand saw.

Re-enter POLONIUS

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Mark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

Ros. Happily he's the second time come to them: for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o' Monday morning: 't was so, indeed

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour,—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem

unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. 'O Jephthah, judge of Israel,' what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

'One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he lovéd passing well.'

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

'As by lot, God wot,'

and then, you know,

'It came to pass, as most like it was,'—

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players

You are welcome, masters; welcome all.—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, my old friend, why, thy face is valanced since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?

—What! my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We 'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see: we 'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play.* What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 't was caviare to the general: but it was —as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affection, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 't was Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter:—if it live in your memory, begin at this line:—let me see, let me see:—

'The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,'

—'t is not so :—it begins with Pyrrhus :—

'The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couchéd in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smeared
With heraldry more dismal ; head to foot
Now is he total gules ; horridly tricked
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damnéd light
To their vile murders : roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sizéd with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.'—

So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken : with good accent, and good discretion.

1 *Play.* 'Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks ; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal matched,

Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnervéd father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo, his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seemed i' th' air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Arousèd vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars his armour, forged for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;

Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!'

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
Pr'ythee say on:—he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps.
Say on: come to Hecuba.

1 *Play.* 'But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen'—

Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

1 *Play.* 'Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemèd loins
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced;
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made—
Unless things mortal move them not at all—

Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods.'

Pol. Look, whe'er he has not turned his colour, and has tears in 's eyes !—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'T is well ; I 'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed ? Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time : after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you lived.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodikin, man, much better : use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping ? Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends : we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit* POLONIUS, *with all the Players except the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend ? can you play the Murder of Gonzago ?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen

lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends [*to* Ros. *and* Guil.], I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye.—

[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working, all his visage wanned;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;

Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the
throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
'Swounds! I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave;
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,

And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain!—I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these
players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this:—the play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

Scene I.—A Room in the Castle

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern.

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;

And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'T is most true:
And he beseeched me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclined.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.
Her father, and myself,—lawful espials,—
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.—
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause

Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* QUEEN.

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.—[*To* OPHELIA.] Read on this book,
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much proved, that, with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. [*Aside.*] O! 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burden!

Pol. I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt* KING *and* POLONIUS.

Enter HAMLET

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question:—

Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them ?—To die,—to sleep,
No more :—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'t is a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die,—to sleep :—
To sleep ! perchance to dream :—ay, there's the rub ;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life :
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,

And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
The fair Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered.

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longéd long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honoured lord, you know right well you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord!

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery, why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are

arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery.—Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Go, farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough: God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't: it hath made me mad. I say we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit.*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That sucked the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter KING *and* POLONIUS

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch, and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel

This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well; but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please,
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his griefs: let her be round with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—A Hall in the Same

Enter HAMLET *and three of the Players*

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not

saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

1 *Play.* I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve: the censure of the which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre

of others. O, there be players that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man; have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play.* I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them. for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.— [*Exeunt Players.*

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.—

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros., Guil. We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Ham. What, ho, Horatio!

Enter HORATIO

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flattered?
No; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath sealed thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damnéd ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note:
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

Danish march. A flourish. Enter, with his guard carrying torches, KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and other Lords attendant*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—[*To* POLONIUS.]—My lord, you played once i' th' university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar; I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my good Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*To the* KING.] O ho, do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA'S *feet.*

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs?

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker! What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

Oph. Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens, die two months ago, and not forgotten yet! Then, there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck. He lays him down upon a bank of flowers. She, seeing

him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in another man, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and leaves him. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loath and unwilling awhile; but in the end accepts his love. [*Exeunt.*

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they 'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you will show him: be not you ashamed to show, he 'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught. I 'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'T is brief, my lord.
Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orbèd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.
P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done.
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must,
For women fear too much, even as they love,
And women's fear and love hold quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is sized, my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.
P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honoured, beloved; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou—

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who killed the first.

Ham. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 't is, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose:
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 't is not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change:
For 't is a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
For who not needs shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,—
Our wills and fates do so contráry run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light;
Sport and repose lock from me day and night;
To desperation turn my trust and hope;
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope;
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy;

Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,—
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now?

P. King. 'T is deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile:
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain. [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she 'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no; they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon; 't is a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty, and we, that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter Lucianus

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are a good chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands. — Begin, murderer, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come:—the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the Sleeper's ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What, frighted with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light!—away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. Why, let the strucken deer go weep,
The hart ungallèd play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
Thus runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—pajock.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I 'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some music! come, the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.—
Come, some music!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir;—pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's

commandment ; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer ; my wit's diseased : but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command ; or, rather, as you say, my mother : therefore no more, but to the matter. My mother, you say,—

Ros. Then, thus she says. Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but 'While the grass grows' —the proverb is something musty.

Enter Players with recorders

O, the recorders: let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would

sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.—

Enter Polonius

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by-and-by. —They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by-and-by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit.*

Ham. By-and-by is easily said.—Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt* Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Horatio, *&c.*

'T is now the very witching time of night

When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes
out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot
blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my
mother:—
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural,
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

Scene III.—A Room in the Same

Enter King, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with
us
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you:
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it with it; it is a massy wheel,
Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoined; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros., Guil. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Enter POLONIUS

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,

To hear the process: I'll warrant, she'll tax him
home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'T is meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS

O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven:
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not;
Though inclination be as sharp as will,
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves
mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what 's in prayer, but this two-fold force,
To be forestalléd, ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned, being down? Then, I'll look up:
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer

Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder?'—
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned, and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 't is seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 't is not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limèd soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay:
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;

And now I'll do 't :—and so he goes to heaven :
And so am I reveng'd ? that would be scanned :
A villain kills my father ; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread ;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May ;
And how his audit stands who knows save Heaven ?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'T is heavy with him. And am I, then, revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage ?
No.
Up, sword ; and know thou a more horrid hent :
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed ;
At gaming, swearing ; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't ;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damned and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays :
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

The KING *rises and advances*

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—A Room in the Same

Enter QUEEN *and* POLONIUS

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him:
Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screened and stood between
Much heat and him. I 'll silence me e'en here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I 'll warrant you;
Fear me not: withdraw, I hear him coming.
[POLONIUS *hides himself behind the arras.*

Enter HAMLET

Ham. Now, mother, what 's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And—would it were not so—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I 'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help, help, help!

Ham. How now! a rat? [*Draws.*] Dead for a ducat, dead!

[*Makes a pass through the arras*

Pol. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain. [*Falls, and dies.*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:
Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed: almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 't was my word.
[*Lifts up the arras, and sees* POLONIUS.
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.—
Leave wringing of your hands: peace; sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damnéd custom have not braz'd it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,

As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow,
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.
Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on his brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows.
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha, have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,

And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion; but, sure, that sense
Is apoplexed: for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thralled
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't,
That thus hath cozened you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense,
Could not so mope.
O shame, where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots,
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseaméd bed ;
Stewed in corruption : honeying, and making love
Over the nasty sty,—
Queen. O, speak to me no more !
These words like daggers enter in mine ears :
No more, sweet Hamlet !
Ham. A murderer, and a villain ;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord :—a Vice of kings ;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket,
Queen No more !
Ham. A king of shreds and patches,—

Enter Ghost

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious figure ?
Queen. Alas ! he 's mad.
Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command ?
O, say !
Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

But, look, amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him!—Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones
Would make them capable.—Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then, what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!
[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation, ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have uttered: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven;
Repent what 's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in
twain!

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
Either subdue the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be blessed,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.
I do repent: but Heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.—
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:

Let the blowt king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damned fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'T were good, you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of breath
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that.

Queen. Alack,
I had forgot: 't is so concluded on.

Ham. There 's letters sealed : and my two school
fellows,—
Whom I will trust, as I will adders fanged,—
They bear the mandate ; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work ;
For 't is the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar : and 't shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—
This man shall set me packing !
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.—
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally ;* HAMLET *dragging in*
POLONIUS.

Scene I.—The Same

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?—

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.
[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.
—Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, 'A rat! a rat!'
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answered?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrained, and out of haunt,
This mad young man; but, so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath killed;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure: he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away.
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged him:

Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do
And what's untimely done,—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—Another Room in the Same

Enter Hamlet

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros., Guil. [*Within.*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 't is kin.

Ros. Tell us where 't is, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! What replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Guil. A thing, my lord!

Ham. Of nothing:—bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Another Room in the Same

Enter KING, *attended*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He 's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is weighed,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.—

Enter ROSENCRANTZ

How now! what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestowed, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN

King. Now, Hamlet, where 's Polonius ?

Ham At supper.

King. At supper ! Where ?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten : a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet : we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots : your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service ; two dishes, but to one table : that 's the end.

King. Alas, alas !

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king ; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this ?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius ?

Ham. In heaven : send thither to see ; if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. [*To some Attendants.*] Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial
safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee
hence
With fiery quickness: therefore, prepare thyself.
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and everything is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them.—But, come; for England!—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with
speed aboard:
Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night.
Away, for everything is sealed and done
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make
haste,—
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—

As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,—thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 't is done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

[*Exit.*

Scene IV.—A Plain in Denmark

Enter Fortinbras, *a Captain, and Forces, marching*

For. Go, captain; from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promised march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

Cap. I will do 't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt* Fortinbras *and Soldiers.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *&c*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 't is already garrisoned.

Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*

Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I 'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *&c.*

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, He, that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,
And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, 'This thing's to do;'
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do 't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:
Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great

Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,
That have a father killed, a mother stained,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough, and continent,
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[*Exit.*

Scene V.—Elsinore. A Room in the Castle

Enter Queen *and* Horatio

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate, indeed, distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she hears
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,

That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshapéd use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.
'T were good she were spoken with, for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit* HORATIO.

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

Oph. [*Sings.*] *How should I your true love know*
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you! nay, pray you, mark. [*Sings.*

He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone:
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

O, oh!

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia,—

Oph. Pray you, mark. [*Sings.*

White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord. [*Sings.*

Oph. *Larded with sweet flowers;*
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.

King. How do ye, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say, the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this: but when they ask you what it means, say you this: [*Sings.*

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:

Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

By Gis, and by Saint Charity, [*Sings.*
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed:
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch,
I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.
O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. And now, behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude!

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain:
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggared,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude! this,
Like to a murdering piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

Enter a Gentleman

What is the matter?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord :
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord ;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, 'Choose we ; Laertes shall be king !'
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king !'
Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry !
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs !
King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed ; Danes following*

Laer. Where is this king ?—Sirs, stand you all without.
Danes. No, let 's come in.
Laer. I pray you, give me leave.
Danes. We will, we will.
[*They retire without the door.*
Laer. I thank you : keep the door.—O thou vile king,
Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard;
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirchéd brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed.—Let him go, Gertrude.—
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
Most throughly for my father.
King. Who shall stay you?
Laer. My will, not all the world:
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
Laer. None but his enemies.
King. Will you know them then?
Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And, like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.
King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.
Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.
Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By Heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love; and, where 't is fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him barefaced on the bier:*
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny.
And in his grave rained many a tear,—
Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down a-down, an you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing 's more than matter.

Oph. There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness,—thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There 's fennel for you, and columbines ;—there 's rue for you ; and here's some for me : we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays :—O, you must wear your rue with a difference.—There 's a daisy : I would give you some violets ; but they withered all when my father died.—They say, he made a good end,—

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again ?*
And will he not come again ?
No, no, he is dead :
Go to thy death-bed :
He never will come again.

His beard as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll ;
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan :
God ha' mercy on his soul !

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' you ! [*Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this ? O God !

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,

Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touched, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so:
His means of death, his obscure burial,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.—Another Room in the Same

Enter Horatio *and a Servant*

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors, sir: they say, they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.— [*Exit Servant.*
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an 't please him. There 's a letter for you, sir: it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England,—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour. In the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear, will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell. He that thou knowest thine,

HAMLET.'

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—Another Room in the Same

Enter KING *and* LAERTES

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears:—but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirred up.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinewed,
And yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,

Lives almost by his looks ; and for myself,—
My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,—
She 's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him ;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces ; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aimed them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost ;
A sister driven into desperate terms,—
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections.—But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that ; you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more :
I loved your father, and we love ourself ;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—

Enter a Messenger

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio, he received them
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.—
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*

[*Reads.*] 'High and mighty,—you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions of my sudden and more strange return.

HAMLET.'

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked,'—
And, in a postscript here, he says, 'alone.'
Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come:
It warms the very sickness in my heart,

That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus diddest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so? how otherwise?—
Will you be ruled by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now returned,—
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talked of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness.—Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and served against, the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
Had witchcraft in 't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast: so far he topped my thought
That I in forgery of shapes and tricks
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was 't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed

If one could match you: the scrimers of their
nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this,—

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your
father;
But that I know love is begun by time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this 'would'
changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;

And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift's sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer:
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed,
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarise;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet, returned, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,

Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratched withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'T were better not assayed: therefore, this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold
If this should blast in proof. Soft,—let me see:—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,—
I ha't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry,—
As make your bouts more violent to that end,—
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venomed stuck
Our purpose may hold there. But stay! what noise?

Enter QUEEN

How now, sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow.—Your sister's drowned, Laertes.

Laer. Drowned!—O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them:
There, on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread
wide,
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, is she drowned!

Queen. Drowned, drowned.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor
Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,

Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore let 's follow. [*Exeunt.*

Scene I.—A Churchyard

Enter two Clowns, with spades and mattocks

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 't is found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three

branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.—

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is will he nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry, is't, crowner's quest-law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity, that great folk shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and gravemakers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll

put another question to thee; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance*

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker: the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit* 2 *Clown.*

1 *Clown digs, and sings*

In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet:
To contract, O, the time, for-a my behove,
O, methought, there was nothing-a meet.

Ham. Hath this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'T is e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 *Clo.* *But age, with his stealing steps,* [*Sings.*
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-offices, one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my

Lord Such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it, might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on't.

1 *Clo.* *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,* [*Sings.*

For and a shrouding sheet:

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of

indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave 's this, sir?

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir.— [*Sings.*

O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in 't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine: 't is for the dead, not for the quick; therefore, thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'T is a quick lie, sir; 't will away again from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

1 *Clo.* For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

1 *Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry; why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because a' was mad: a' shall recover his wits there; or, if a' do not, 't is no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How 'strangely'?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?

1 *Clo.* I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die, —as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in—he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while: and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here 's a skull now; this skull hath lain in the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, this same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick !—I knew him, Horatio : a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy : he hath borne me on his back a thousand times ; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is ! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now ? your gambols ? your songs ? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar ? Not one now, to mock your own grinning ? quite chap-fallen ? Now, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come ; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord ?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander looked o' this fashion i' th' earth ?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so ? pah ! [*Puts down the skull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio ! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole ?

Hor. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot ; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead

it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O! that that earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft, but soft! aside:—here comes the king.

Enter Priests, &c., in procession; the Corse of Ophelia, Laertes *and Mourners following;* King, Queen, *their Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow,
And with such maimèd rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life; 't was of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark.

[*Retiring with* Horatio.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more be done:
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' th' earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell.
[*Scattering flowers.*
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife:

I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet
maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.
Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that curséd head
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of!—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[*Leaps into the grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'er-top old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.
Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them
stand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*
Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*
Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For though I am not splenitive and rash
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Away thy hand!
King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet! Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Ham. I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Swounds! show me what thou 'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up Esill? eat a crocodile?
I 'll do 't.—Dost thou come here to whine,
To outface me with leaping in her grave,
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth
I 'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:

And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir:
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

[*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.— [*Exit* Horatio.

[*To* Laertes.] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We 'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—A Hall in the Castle

Enter Hamlet *and* Horatio

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;—
You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,—
And praised be rashness for it: let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our dear plots do pall; and that should teach us,
There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.—

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarfed about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire;
Fingered their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho, such bugs and goblins in my life,—
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is 't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
Hor. I beseech you.
Ham. Being thus benetted round with villainies,—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains
They had begun the play,—I sat me down,
Devised a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and laboured much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service:—wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
Hor. Ay, good my lord.
Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them as the palm should flourish;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear;
And stand a comma 'tween their amities;
And many such-like 'as's' of great charge,—
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allowed.
Hor. How was this sealed?
Ham. Why, even in that was Heaven ordinant.

I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscribed it; gave 't the impression; placed it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.
'T is dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass, and fell-incensèd points,
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now upon—
He that hath kill'd my king, and whored my mother;
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is 't not perfect conscience

To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be
damned
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from
England
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, 'One.'
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I 'll court his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put
me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace, who comes here?

Enter OSRICK

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 't is a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall

stand at the king's mess: 't is a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to his right use; 't is for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 't is very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot for my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 't were,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[HAMLET *moves him to put on his hat.*

Osr. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you: though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me.—Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should

compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Ham. What 's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That 's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew, you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages; that 's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen

passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and that would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can: if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit* Osrick.]—He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for 's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on, only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter, a kind of yesty collection which

carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osrick, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so: since he went into France I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. Thou wouldst not think how ill all 's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Hora. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike anything, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, *Lords*, OSRICK, *and Attendants with foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The* KING *puts the hand of* LAERTES *into that of* HAMLET.

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punished
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconcilement
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
Give us the foils.—Come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick.—
Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both;
But since he's bettered, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy; let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table—
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire:
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet!'—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well:—again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here 's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first: set it by awhile.
Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He 's fat, and scant of breath.—
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord: I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poisoned cup: it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by-and-by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally:

I pray you, pass with your best violence.

I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[LAERTES *wounds* HAMLET; *then, in scuffling they change rapiers, and* HAMLET *wounds* LAERTES.

King. Part them! they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*The* QUEEN *falls.*

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is 't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrick;

I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swounds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*
Ham. O villainy!—Ho, let the door be lock'd!
Treachery! seek it out. [LAERTES *falls.*
Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good:
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenomed. The foul practice
Hath turned itself on me: lo! here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poisoned.
I can no more. The king, the king's to blame.
Ham. The point envenomed too!
Then, venom, to thy work! [*Stabs the* KING.
All. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damnéd Dane,
Drink off this potion:—is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [KING *dies.*
Laer. He is justly served;
It is a poison tempered by himself.—
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet;
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.—
I am dead, Horatio.—Wretched queen, adieu!—
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, —as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest,—O! I could tell you,—
But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Hor. Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
Here's yet some liquor left.
Ham. As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by Heaven I 'll have it.—
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story. [*March afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?
Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart.—Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!—
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the English Ambassadors, and others*

For. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

For. This quarry cries on havock.—O proud death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?

1 *Amb.* The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing

To tell him his commandment is fulfilled,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placéd to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forced cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.
For. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.
Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently performed,

Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.
For. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally: and for his passage,
The soldiers' music, and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies:—such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*Exeunt, bearing off the bodies; after which, a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

NOTES

I. ii. p. 43. **Too much i' the sun.**—Alluding to the old proverb, "Out of God's blessing into the warm sun," which signifies exchanging a righteous condition for a corrupt one. There is also a suggestion of the glare of his uncle's festivities following so closely on his father's death, and a veiled play on the word *son* following the King's '*my son.*'

I. ii. p. 46. **Hyperion.**—One of the names of Apollo, the Sun-god; the classical model of beauty.

I. ii. p. 46. **Niobe.**—The mother of several sons and daughters, of whom she was so proud that she vaunted herself to be better worthy of immortal honours than Latona, the mother of Apollo and Diana. This so incensed Latona that she urged her children to avenge her. Apollo therefore slew all Niobe's sons with his darts, and her daughters were similarly slaughtered by Diana. Overwhelmed by her loss, Niobe wept until she became transformed to stone.

I. ii. p. 48. **The funeral baked meats.**—It was anciently the custom to give an entertainment at a funeral. The usage was derived from the Roman *cœna funeralis*, or "funeral supper," and continued to be observed in Scotland and the north of England under the name of an "arvel supper."

I. iv. p. 59. **Swinish phrase.**—The intemperance of the Danes was a matter of special notoriety at the time when Shakspere wrote.

I. iv. p. 60. **The dram . . . substance.**—That *eale* is *evil* is certain, because the 2nd Quarto, which first printed the passage, spells *devil* as *deale* twice in one line, II. ii. p. 104:—

> "The spirit that I have seene
> May be a *deale*, and the *deale* hath power," etc.

The Folio has "dilvell or dowl." *Look* has its old meaning "*puts*," and "*of a doubt*" means "into doubt, into discredit." This is one of the many passages which needs only explanation, and not emendation.—F.

I. iv. p. 60. **In complete steel.**—It is recorded by Olaus Wormius that it was the custom to bury the Danish kings in their armour.

I. iv. p. 62. **The Nemean lion.**—Whose hide was so tough that all Hercules' weapons failed to pierce it, and he at last slew it by strangling.

I. v. p. 69. **By Saint Patrick.**—Probably invoked as the "Keeper of Purgatory"; or, more vaguely, as the patron saint of all confusion and unrequited crimes.

II. ii. p. 91. **I have an eye of you.**—I have a glimpse of your purpose.

II. ii. p. 93. **The late innovation.**—In Shakspere's time the fashion of allowing juvenile performances considerably interfered with the popularity of the companies of grown-up actors. An Order was issued by the Privy Council during the year 1600, laying severe restrictions on the stage, and limiting the number of playhouses to two within the city.

II. ii. p. 93. **Cry out on the top of question.**—Speak their parts in a loud shrill tone, whether appropriate or not.

II. ii. p. 94. **Elsinore.**—The residence of the Danish Court (see map).

II. ii. p. 94. **Hercules and his load too.**—Probably an allusion to the Globe Theatre, of which Hercules carrying the globe for Atlas was the sign.

II. ii. p. 95. **Handsaw.**—Heronshaw, hernshaw, a heron. The whole phrase is borrowed from falconry. The birds fly with the wind, and when it is blowing from the south the sportsman, not being dazzled by the sun, can readily distinguish them. If *handsaw* is interpreted as a carpenter's tool, then *hawk* has its meaning of a plasterer's handboard, or some other tool.

II. ii. p. 95. **Roscius.**—The most famous actor of ancient Rome.

Notes

II. ii. p. 96. **The law of writ and the liberty.**—The formal, with strict observance of the text—*i.e.*, the "classical": and the "free," in which the actors made use of interpolations—*i.e.*, the "romantic." Both named according to arbitrary rules of art prevailing at the time.

II. ii. p. 96. **One fair daughter, &c.**—The lines here quoted by Hamlet are from an old ballad, entitled "Jephtha, Judge of Israel," of which there is a copy preserved in Percy's *Relques* and another, a more correct version, in Evan's *Old Ballads* (1810).

II. ii. p. 96. **First row of the pious chanson.**—The first row means the first column; old ballads were frequently printed in double-column form. *Pious chansons* were a kind of Christmas carol, containing some portion of Scripture history rudely versified and chanted by those who went about from door to door, at Church festival Seasons, collecting alms.

II. ii. p. 97. **Cracked within the ring.**—The old gold piece was thin and liable to crack. There was a ring or circle on it, within which the sovereign's head or other device was placed, and if the crack extended beyond this ring it was rendered uncurrent.

II. ii. p. 97. **Give us a taste of your quality.**—As Hamlet here asks the player to recite to him before the decision as to what play his company should subsequently produce, so the travelling companies of actors were used to call on the Mayor and Alderman of a town and give them some sample of their business before being allowed to play in the Guildhall. We may suppose that some such previous exhibition was given to an ordinary rich patron. The episode of Hamlet and the actor, therefore, seems to be based on an incident common to the experience of Elizabethan players, and is another of those ordinary events lifted out of life and employed by Shakspere for a dramatic end, and given a new significance. It is particularly noteworthy that the poet's father, John, entertained two companies of players when Mayor of Stratford in 1568. Shakspere was then only four years old.

III. i. p. 108. **Take arms against a sea of troubles.**—An allusion to a custom attributed to the Celts by

many classical writers. In Fleming's translation of Ælian's *Histories* (1576) it is said, "they throw themselves into the foaming floods with their swords drawn in their hands."

III. ii. p. 114. **The Groundlings.**—Those who frequented the "ground" or "pit" of the theatre. Originally it had neither floor nor benches, but was a mere sunken space, considerably beneath the level of the stage.

III. ii. p. 114. **Termagant.**—The name of a supposed god of the Saracens, a common character in the Mystery Plays, where he figured as a violent tyrant.

III. ii. p. 118. **Chameleon.**—An animal of the lizard family, having the astonishing property of changing colour so as to escape observation, and able to exist for such long periods without food that it was formerly said to live upon air.

III. ii. p. 118. **I' the Capitol.**—Cæsar was killed in the Curia Pompeii, but Shakspere had evidently accepted the popular error, as he repeats it in *Julius Cæsar*.

III. ii. p. 119. **"For, oh, for, oh, the hobby-horse is forgot."**—A line from an old ballad, deploring the omission of the hobby-horse from the May games by desire of the Puritans.

III. ii. p. 126. **Provincial roses.**—Rosettes worn on the shoes. A name properly belonging to the roses grown at Provins, near Paris, in Lower Brie.

III. ii. p. 129. **To recover the wind of me.**—A term borrowed from the chase; to recover the wind of an animal meant to gain the advantage of the windward side, and thus prevent the scent of the pursuer from reaching it.

III. ii. p. 131. **The soul of Nero.**—Nero murdered his mother, Agrippina.

III. ii. p. 131. **To give them seals.**—To confirm them by deeds.

IV. i. p. 148. **Out of haunt.**—Away from the haunts of men.

Notes

IV. ii. p. 150. **Hide fox and all after.**—The name of a juvenile game, similar to what is now called "hide and seek."

IV. iii. p. 152. **Convocation of political Worms.**—An allusion to the Diet of Worms, convoked in 1521 by the Emperor Charles V.

IV. v. p. 158. **Cockle hat.**—A cockle shell worn in the hat was the badge of a pilgrim.

IV. v. p. 159. **The owl was a baker's daughter.**—Mr. Dorras says, "It is a common tradition in Gloucestershire that our Saviour went into a baker's shop and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough in the oven for Him, but was reprimanded by her daughter, who, insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately began to swell, whereupon the baker's daughter cried out, 'Heugh, heugh, heugh!' which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour to transform her into that bird for her wickedness."

IV. v. p. 161. **Switzers.**—The king calls to his own immediate bodyguard, the Swiss being formerly the mercenaries of any nation that chose to hire them.

IV. vii. p. 170. **Like the spring that turneth wood to stone.**—In allusion to waters that possess a petrifying power, as the dropping well at Knaresborough.

IV. vii. p. 173. **In forgery of shapes and tricks.**—In invention of dexterous feats.

V. i. p. 180. **Yaughan.**—Probably meant for the name of a liquor seller and tavern-keeper.

V. i. p. 181. **"In youth," &c.**—Clown's blundering version of three stanzas from a ballad called "The Aged Lover Renounceth Love," attributed to Lord Vaux. Reprinted in Percy's *Reliques*.

V. i. p. 182. **His double vouchers, his recoveries.**—"A recovery with *double* voucher is the one usually suffered, and is so named from *two* persons (the later of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person)

being successively *vouched* or called upon to warrant the tenant's title" [Ritson.].

V. i. p. 186. **Yorick.**—Hamlet's eulogy is conjectured to be a reminiscence of the famous jester, Tarlton (died 1588).

V. i. p. 190. **Ossa.**—A lofty mountain in Thessaly.

V. i. p. 191. **Golden Couplets.**—In allusion to the fact that the dove lays only two eggs and the young birds are covered with yellow down.

V. ii. p. 192. **Sea-gown.**—Cotgrave has "Esclavine, a sea-gowne; a coarse, high-collared and short-sleeved gown, reaching to the mid-leg and used mostly by seamen and sailors."

V. ii. p. 195. **Water-fly.**—This insect flits up and down on the surface of the water with apparently meaningless diligence, hence the application to Osric's character.

V. ii. p. 199. **This lapwing, &c.**—In allusion to the old proverb, thus given in Meres's *Wits' Treasury* (1598): "As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head as soon as she is hatched."

V. ii. p. 199. **Outward habit of encounter.**—Polished manners.

V. ii. p. 204. **He's fat and scant of breath.**—Probably inserted owing to the physical characteristics of Burbage, the first great actor of Hamlet.

GLOSSARY

Above: "more ——"; also, in addition. II. ii. p. 84.

Abridgement: a brief performance, or entertainment. II. ii. p. 87.

Absolute: positive. V. i. p. 184.

Abuse: delusion. IV. vii. p. 171.

Abuses: deceives. II. ii. p. 104.

Addition: title. I. iv. p. 69.

Address: prepare. I. ii. p. 50.

Admiration: astonishment. I. ii. p. 48.

Affection: affectation. II. ii. p. 97.

Affront: confront, meet. III. i. p. 106.

Aim: guess. IV. v. p. 158.

Allowance: liberty. II. ii. p. 82.

Amiss: calamity. IV. v. p. 158.

Anchor's cheer: hermit's fare; *i.e.*, frugal fare. III. ii. p. 123.

An end: on end. I. v. p. 64.

Angle: angling-line. V. ii. p. 194.

Answer: acceptance of the challenge. V. ii. p. 199.

Answered: explained. IV. i. p. 148.

Antick: disguised. I. v. p. 71.

Antique: ancient. V. ii. p. 207.

Approve: enhance. V. ii. p. 197.

Appurtenance: fitting accompaniment. II. ii. p. 94.

Argal: clown's blunder for '*ergo*,' therefore. V. i. p. 179.

Article: "great ——"; very long inventory of merits. Technical term for a clause in a legal document. V. ii. p. 197.

Aslant: over. IV. vii. p. 177.

Assault: "of general ——"; which generally attacks youth, II. i. p. 74.

Assay: invite, persuade. III. i. p. 105; "make ——"; lend me your aid. III. iii. p. 132.

Assays of bias: indirect intentions. II. i. p. 75.

Assigns: appurtenances. V. ii. p. 198.

Attribute: reputation. I. iv. p. 59.

Authorities: positions of authority in the King's bestowal. IV. ii. p. 150.

Avouch: proof. I. i. p. 35.

Baked meats: pastry. I. ii. p. 48. See Notes.

Ban: curse. III. ii. p. 125.

Barked about: formed like bark over. I. v. p. 66.

Bated: "no leisure ——"; without respite. V. ii. p. 193.

Beaver: visor. I. ii. p. 50.

Beetles: overhangs. I. iv. p. 61.

Bent: extent. Technical term in archery for the utmost bending of the bow before letting the arrow fly. II. ii. p. 79.

Best: "in all my ——"; to the full extent of my power. I. ii. p. 45.

Beteem: allow, permit. I. ii. p. 46.

Bilboes: bars of iron with fetters attached to them, by which mutinous or disorderly soldiers were linked together in ancient times; originally made at Bilbao, in Spain. V. ii. p. 192.

Bisson rheum: blinding tears. II. ii. p. 100.

Blank: the *blank* was the technical name for the white mark at which shot or arrows were aimed. IV. i. p. 149.

Blanks: makes pale. III. ii. p. 123.

Glossary

Blast in proof: fail when tested; a forceful simile taken from the testing of cannon, which sometimes burst at the trial. IV. vii. p. 176.

Blastments: blighting influences. I. iii. p. 54.

Blazon: "eternal ——"; divulgence of eternal mysteries. I. v. p. 64.

Blench: flinch, shrink. III. i. p. 104.

Blood: passion. IV. iv. p. 157.

Blown: blooming. III. i. p. 112.

Blowt: bloated. III. iv. p. 145.

Board: accost. II. ii. p. 86.

Bodes: forebodes, indicates. I. i. p. 35.

Bodkin: stiletto, a small dagger. III. i. p. 108.

Bore: calibre of a gun; used figuratively to express 'weight' or 'importance' of the matter. IV. vi. p. 168.

Borne in hand: beguiled with false information. II. ii. p. 81.

Bound: prepared. I. v. p. 63.

Bourn: boundary. III. i. p. 108.

Brainish: brain-sick, overwrought. IV. i. p. 147.

Bravery: boastfulness. V. ii. p. 195.

Breathing: whispering. I. iii. p. 58; exercising. V. ii. p. 199.

Broad: reckless. III. iv. p. 136.

Brokers: go-betweens, negotiators. I. iv. p. 57.

Brooch: an ornament worn in the hat. IV. vii. p. 173.

Bruit: noise abroad. I. ii. p. 45.

Bugs: bugbears, spectres. V. ii. p. 192.

Bulk: body. II. i. p. 77.

Buttons: buds. Fr., *boutons*. I. iii. p. 53.

Buz! Buz! an exclamation used to silence a relater of stale news. II. ii. p. 95.

Buzzers: whisperers. IV. v. p. 164.

Candied: flattering. III. ii. p. 116.

Canon: decree, law. I. ii. p. 46.

Capable: alive, endowed with sensibility. III. iv. p. 142.

Cap-à-pé: from head to foot. I. ii. p. 49.

Capital: involving punishment by death. IV. vii. p. 169.

Card: "by the ——"; exactly; an allusion to a sailing chart. V. i. p. 184.

Carriage: import, purport. I. i. p. 36.

Carry it away: get the best of it. II. ii. p. 94.

Carve: choose, select. I. iii. p. 53.

Cataplasm: plaster. IV. vii. p. 176.

Cautel: deceit. I. iii. p. 53.

Caviare: a Russian delicacy made of the roe of sturgeons, and limited in its use to the nobility; it was neither obtainable nor relished by the common people. II ii. p. 97.

Cease: decease. III. iii. p. 132.

Censure: opinion. I. iii. p. 55.

Cerements: shrouds, grave-clothes. I. iv. p. 69.

Chameleon's dish: *i.e.*, air. III. ii. p. 118. See Notes.

Character: inscribe, imprint. I. iii. p. 54; handwriting. IV. vii. p. 171.

Chopine: a high shoe or clog, formerly worn by Italian and Spanish ladies. II. ii. p. 97.

Chough: crow, — or possibly 'chuff' = a boorish peasant; applied contemptuously to the wealthy landowner. V. ii. p. 196.

Cicatrice: wound. IV. iii. p. 154.

Circumstance: indirect methods, circumlocution. I. v. p. 68; III. i. p. 105.

Clepe: to call. I. iv. p. 59.

Clouts: clothes. II. ii. p. 95.

Cold: chaste. IV. vii. p. 177.

Columbine: symbol of ingratitude. IV. v. p. 158.

Comment: intense observation. III. ii. p. 117.

Commerce: intercourse. III. i. p. 110.

Complexion: humour. I. iv. p. 59.

Glossary

Comply: observe the formalities of ceremony. II. ii. p. 94.
Conceit: imagination. III. iv. p. 142; ornamentation. V. ii. p. 198.
Concernancy: significance. V. ii. p. 197.
Conclusions: experiments. III. iv. p. 145.
Condolement: mourning. I. ii. p. 44.
Consequence: "in this ——"; in the following manner. II. i. p. 75.
Considered: convenient. II. ii. p. 82.
Consonancy: affection, friendship. II. ii. p. 91.
Continent: that which contains. IV. iv. p. 157; composition. V. ii. p. 196.
Contraction: the making of a marriage contract. III. iv. p. 139.
Conversation: experience. III. ii. p. 116.
Coped: "—— withal"; met with. III. ii. p. 118.
Couched: hidden. II. ii. p. 98.
Coted: overtook. II. ii. p. 92.
Count: trial. IV. vii. p. 170.
Countenance: favour. IV. ii. p. 159.
Counter: a hunting term for following the scent in the wrong direction. IV. v. p. 162.
Counterfeit presentment: painted portraits. III. iv. p. 139.
Cousin: used for 'nephew.' I. ii. p. 43.
Cozenage: cheating, trickery. V. ii. p. 194.
Crants: garlands, chaplets. It was the custom to carry garlands before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over her grave. They may still be seen hung in some churches in Derbyshire, &c. V. i. p. 188.
Credent: credulous. I. iii. p. 53.
Cried: "—— in the top of mine"; were of higher value than mine. II. ii. p. 97.
Crook: bend. III. ii. p. 116.
Crowner: coroner. V. i. p. 179.
Cry: troop or company. III. ii. p. 126.
Cunnings: respective proficiency. IV. vii. p. 176.
Curb: yield, bow. III. iv. p. 143.
Daisy: symbol of dissembling. IV. v. p. 166.
Dane: King of Denmark. I. i. p. 32.
Danskers: Danes. II. i. p. 72.
Dearly: deeply, sincerely. IV. iii. p. 153.
Dearth: great value. V. ii. p. 197.
Declining: falling. II. ii. p. 99.
Defeated: lessened, marred. I. ii. p. 40.
Defence: "your ——"; the art of defence. IV. vii. p. 173.
Deliver: relate. I. ii. p. 49.
Dexterity: haste. I. ii. p. 47.
Difference: properly a slight *difference* in armorial bearings to distinguish branches of the same family. IV. v. p. 166.
Differences: qualities. V. ii. p. 196.
Dilated articles: documents wherein the matter is set forth fully. I. ii. p. 41.
Disappointed: unprepared. I. v. p. 66.
Disclose: reveal. III. i. p. 112. See Notes.
Discourse: reasoning faculty. IV. iv. p. 156.
Discourse of reason: the power of reasoning. I. ii. p. 46.
Discovery: disclosure. II. ii. p. 91.
Dispatched: deprived. I. v. p. 66.
Distemper: disorder, distraction. III. ii. p. 128.
Distempered: distraught. III. ii. p. 127.
Distrust you: fear for you. III. ii. p. 121.
Document: lesson. IV. v. p. 166.
Dole: grief. I. ii. p. 40.
Douts: extinguishes. IV. vii. p. 178.
Down-gyved: hanging loosely down like a fetter band. II. i. p. 76.

Glossary

Drab: harlot. II. ii. p. 104.
Dupp'd: opened. IV. v. p. 160.
Eager: sharp, acid. I. v. p. 66.
Eale: evil. I. iv. p. 60.
Ear: "in the ——"; within hearing. III. i. p. 113.
Ecstasy: madness. II. i. p. 77.
Edge: incitement. III. i. p. 106.
Effects: intentions. III. iv. p. 142.
Eisel: vinegar. V. i. p. 180.
Enactures: resolutions. III. ii. p. 122.
Encumbered: crossed. I. v. p. 71.
Engaged: entangled. III. iii. p. 134.
Enseamed: defiled, unclean. III. iv. p. 141.
Entertainment: service. V. ii p. 200.
Entreatments: the entreaties you receive for granting an interview I. iii. p. 57.
Enviously: violently. IV. v. p. 157.
Erring: wandering. I. i. p. 39.
Escoted: paid. Fr., '*escot*,' reckoning. II. ii. p. 93.
Espials: spies. III. i. p. 106.
Estate: rank. V. i. p. 187.
Even: straightforward. II. ii. p. 91.
Even-Christian: fellow-Christian. V. i. p. 179.
Excrements: outgrowths; hair and nails. III. iv. p. 142.
Expostulate: discuss freely. II. ii. p. 82.
Express: mobile. II. ii. p. 92.
Extent: conduct. II. ii. p. 94.
Extravagant: unconfined, uncontrolled. I. i. p. 39.
Eyases: hawk-nestlings. II. ii. p. 93.
Eye: presence. IV. iv. p. 154.
Eyrie: nest; specifically an eagle's nest. II. ii. p. 93.
Faculty: parts, ingenuity. II. ii. p. 92.
Fair: gently. IV. i. p. 149.
Fancy: gaudy show. I. iii. p. 55.
Fantasy: whim. IV. iv. p. 157.
Fardels: burdens. III. i. p. 108.
Fashion: passing mood. III. i. p. 113.
Favour: appearance. V. i. p. 188.
Fay: faith. II. ii. p. 90.
Fear: fear for. I. iii. p. 54; IV. v. p. 163.
Feelingly: with delicate perception. V. ii. p. 196.
Fellies: rims. II. ii. p. 100.
Fennel: symbol of flattery. IV. v. p. 166.
Fetch of warrant: justifiable pretence. II. i. p. 74.
Find: fathom, unriddle, III. i. p. 113.
Fine: end. V. i. p. 182.
Fitness: convenience. V. ii. p. 200.
Fits: becomes. I. iii. p. 53.
Flaw: sudden blast of wind. V. i. p. 187.
Flush: full of energy. III. iii. p. 135.
Flushing: redness. I. ii. p. 47.
Fond: foolish. I. v. p. 67; V. ii. p. 200.
For all: once for all, final. I. iii. p. 58.
Fordo: destroy. V. i. p. 187.
Fordoes: destroys. II. i. p. 77.
Forgery: invention. IV. vii p. 173
Forward: inclined. III. i. p. 105.
Frame: shape, order. III. ii. p. 127.
Free: innocent. II. ii. p. 103; III. ii. p. 124.
Fret: annoy; with an allusion to the musical sense, '*fret*' meaning 'stop.' III. ii. p. 130.
Front: brow. III. iv. p. 139.
Function: whole bodily activity. II. ii. p. 102.
Fust: grow mouldy. IV. iv. p. 156.
Gaged: risked. I. i. p. 36.
Gain-giving: misgiving. V. ii. p. 201.
Gait: proceeding. I. ii. p. 41.
Galled: inflamed by weeping. I. ii. p. 47.
General gender: the masses, the populace. IV. vii. p. 170
Gentry: gentility, courtesy. II ii. p. 79.
Germane: akin. V. ii. p. 198.
Gib: a tom-cat. III. iv. p. 145.

Glossary

Globe: head. I. v. p. 67.
God be wi' you: good-bye. II. i. p. 75.
God 'ild you: God reward you. IV. v. p. 159.
Goose-quills: pens; *i.e.*, written criticism. II. ii. p. 93.
Grained: ineradicably dyed, ingrained. III. iv. p. 140.
Green: foolish through inexperience. I. iii. p. 56.
Greenly: foolishly. IV. v. p. 161.
Gross: "in the ——"; speaking generally. I. i. p. 35.
Groundlings: the people in the pit of the theatre. III. ii. p. 114. See Notes.
Gules: "total ——"; completely red; *gules*, heraldic term for red. II. ii. p. 98.
Handsaw: heron. II. ii. p. 95. See Notes.
Handsome: "more —— than fine," more truly artistic than elaborately showy. II. ii. p. 97.
Happily: haply, possibly. I. i. p. 38; II. ii. p. 95.
Haps: fortune. IV. iii. p. 154.
Hatchment: an escutcheon, coat-of-arms. IV. v. p. 167.
Have: follow, understand. II. ii. p. 75.
Head: armed force. IV. v. p. 162.
Hebenon: henbane. I. v. p. 65.
Hectic: fever. IV. iii. p. 154.
Hent: seizure, capture. III. iii. p. 135.
Herb of grace: rue, emblematical of sorrow. IV. v. p. 166.
Hic et ubique: here and everywhere. I. v. p. 68.
Hillo! ho! ho! the re-call used by falconers to the hawk. I. v. p. 68.
Home: thoroughly. III. iii. p. 133.
Honest: virtuous. III. i. p. 109.
Honesty: virtue. III. i. p. 110.
Hoodman-blind: blind man's buff. III. iv. p. 140.
Hugger-mugger: "in ——"; with unseemly speed and secrecy. IV. v. p. 161.
Humorous: full of fancies. II. ii. p. 92.
Husbandry: economy. I. iii. p. 55.
Hyracanian beast: the tiger, said to abound in Hyracania. II. ii. p. 98.
Ilium: Priam's palace at Troy. II. ii. p. 99.
Ill-breeding: trouble-making, scandal-loving. IV. v. p. 158.
Illume: illumine. I. i. p. 33.
Impart: bestow, devote myself to your interests. The King implies that he will put forward Hamlet's claim to succeed him on the throne as warmly as he would for his own son. I. ii. p. 45.
Imperious: imperial. V. i. p. 187.
Implorators: implorers. I. iii. p. 58.
Imponed: wagered. V. ii. p. 198.
Imposthume: canker, corruption. IV. iv. p. 155.
Imputation: reputation. V. ii. p. 198.
Incapable: insensible; *i.e.*, not realising. IV. vii. p. 177.
Incorrect: unresigned. I. ii. p. 44.
Indentures: "a pair of ——"; agreements made in duplicate on the same sheet, and divided by an indented line. V. i. p. 183.
Index: outset. The *index* was formerly placed at the beginning of the book. III. iv. p. 139.
Indifferent: customary, ordinary. II. ii. p. 89; fairly, tolerably. III. i. p. 110.
Indirections: round-about methods. II. i. 75.
Infusion: qualities, character. V. ii. p. 197.
Ingenious: intelligent. V. i. p. 189.
Insinuation: meddling. V. ii. p. 194.
Instances: motives. III. ii. p. 122.
Jealousy: distrust. II. i. p. 77.
John-a-dreams: nickname for a sleepy-headed, dreamy fellow. II. ii. p. 103.
Jowls: throws. V. i. p. 181.

Glossary

Jump: exactly. I. i. p. 35.
Jump upon: immediately following. V. ii. p. 209.
Keep: reside. II. i. p. 72.
Kettle: kettle-drum. V. ii. p. 203.
Kibe: chilblain. V. i. p. 184.
Kin: "more than ——"; doubly a kinsman since his marriage with his brother's wife. I. ii. p. 43.
Kindless: unnatural. II. ii. p. 103.
Laboursome: persistent. I. ii. p. 42.
Lapsed: caught, enmeshed. III. iv. p. 141.
Lapwing: precocious fellow. V. ii. p. 199. See Notes.
Larded: dressed, adorned. IV. v. p. 159.
Lazar-like: like leprosy. I. v. p. 66.
Leave: remove. III. iv. p. 140.
Lenten: poor, meagre. II. ii. p. 92.
Lethe: the Greek word for "oblivion"; a river of Hades of whose water all souls were compelled to drink after leaving Tartarus, that they might entirely forget the past. I. v. p. 64.
Lets: hinders. I. iv. p. 62.
Lightness: lightheadedness. II. ii. p. 85.
Limed: caught as with lime, —formerly spread on cloth to catch birds. III. iii. p. 134.
List: boundary. IV. v. p. 162.
Little: miniature. II. ii. p. 94.
Living: enduring. V. i. p. 191.
Loggats: small logs or pieces of wood used in a game similar to bowls. V. i. p. 182.
Look: show, appear. IV. vii. p. 176.
Lose: expend, waste. I. ii. p. 42.
Luxury: lust. I. v. p. 66.
Machine: the vital machine, the body. II. ii. p. 84.
Maimed: incomplete. V. i. p. 187.
Main: main thing,—namely. II. ii. p. 81; the whole. IV. iv. p. 155.
Make you at: brings you to. II. ii. p. 90.
Margent: marginal notes. V. ii. p. 198.
Market: bargain. IV. iv. p. 156.
Mart: dealings, trade. I. i. p. 35.
Mazzard: jaw. V. i. p. 182.
Means: introduction. IV. vi. p. 168.
Memory: "of ——"; remembered. V. ii. p. 197.
Mercy: "of ——"; merciful. IV. vi. p. 168.
Merely: absolutely. I. ii. p. 43.
Miching mallecho: lurking mischief. III. ii. p. 120.
Might: could. I. i. p. 35.
Milch: milky, tearful. II. ii. p. 101.
Milky: milk-white. II. ii. p. 90.
Mineral: mine. IV. i. p. 148.
Mobled: muffled. II. ii. p. 140.
Model: counterpart. V. ii. p. 191.
Moiety: part. I. i. p. 36.
Moist star: the moon. I. i. p. 37.
Mole: defect. I. iv. p. 59.
Mope: lose its function, or activity. III. iv. p. 138.
Mortal: deadly. IV. vii. p. 175.
Motion: feeling, emotion. III. iv. p. 140.
Mould of form: standard; the model upon which all form themselves. III. i. p. 112.
Mouse: a term of endearment. III. iv. p. 145.
Mows: wry faces. II. ii. p. 94.
Muddy-mettled: poor-spirited. II. ii. p. 103.
Murdering-piece: a small piece of ordnance with several barrels; it could be charged with loose shot and pieces of iron that would spread widely when fired. IV. v. p. 161.
Mutes: silent onlookers. V. ii. p. 207.
Napkin: handkerchief. V. ii. p. 204.
Nature: natural love. I. v. p. 66.
Nature's livery: constitutional defect. I. iv. p. 59.
Naught: wicked. III. ii. p. 120.
Neighboured to: closely acquainted with. II. ii. p. 78.

Glossary

Nerve: sinews. I. iv. p. 62.
New-lighted: just alighted. III. iv. p. 139.
Nighted: dark as night. I. ii. p. 39.
Nonce: time, occasion. IV. vii. p. 176.
Nose: smell. IV. iii. p. 152.
Noted: recognised. II. i. p. 73.
Noyance: danger. III. iii. p. 132.
Obsequious: alluding to the funereal rites. Shakspere frequently uses this word in connection with obsequies. I. ii. p. 44.
Occulted: concealed. III. ii. p. 117.
Odds: "at the ——"; with the advantage given. V. ii. p. 209.
O'er-crows: subdues. V. ii. p. 208.
O'er-raught: over-took. III. i. p. 105.
O'er-sized: smeared, coated as with size or glue. II. ii. p. 95.
O'er-teemed: over-prolific: exhausted by child-bearing. II. ii. p. 100.
O'ertook: overcome by intoxication. II. i. p. 75.
Of: over. II. ii. p. 79.
Offence: gains of the offence. III. iii. p. 134.
Operant: active. III. ii. p. 122.
Opposed: opponent. I. iii. p. 55.
Opposites: opponents. V. ii. p. 194.
Orchard: a garden. I. v. p. 65.
Order: custom, rule. V. i. p. 188.
Ore: here used for 'gold.' IV. i. p. 148.
Orisons: prayers. III. i. p. 109.
Ostentation: obsequies. IV. v. p. 167.
Outstretched: extolled. II. ii. p. 90.
Overpeering: overflowing. IV. v. p. 162.
Packing: scheming. III. iv. p. 146.
Paddock: a toad. III. iv. p. 145.
Painted: pictured. II. ii. p. 93.
Pajock: peacock. III. ii. p. 126.
Pall: fail. V. ii. p. 192.
Pardon: permission. I. ii. p. 42.
Partisan: a pike. I. i. p. 38.
Parts: qualities, accomplishments. IV. vii. p. 172.
Party: companion. II. i. p. 54.
Passage: "for his ——"; to commemorate his passing away. V. ii. p. 210.
Pass of practice: treacherous thrust. IV. vii. p. 175.
Passion: overwhelming sorrow. II. ii. p. 101.
Pate: head. V. i. p. 182.
Patience: permission. III. ii. p. 118.
Pause: perplexity. III. iii. p. 133; consideration. IV. iii. p. 151.
Peace-parted: peacefully departed. V. i. p. 188.
Peak: shuffle. II. ii. p. 103.
Pelican: supposed to feed its young with its own blood. IV. v. p. 164.
Perdy: *Par Dieu!* By God! III. ii. p. 127.
Perpend: consider. II. ii. p. 83.
Petar: a mortar used in countermining to break through into the enemies' galleries. III. iv. p. 146.
Picked: affected, spruce. V. i. p. 184.
Pickers and stealers: *i.e.*, hands. III. ii. p. 128.
Pitch: importance. Term borrowed from falconry, signifying the height to which the hawk soars. III. i. p. 109.
Play: task, undertaking. V. ii. p. 193.
Played: "—— the desk or tablebook"; kept this letter and their love secret. II. ii. p. 84.
Plurisy: surfeit. IV. vii. p. 174.
Point: "at ——"; completely. I. ii. p. 49.
Polacks: Poles. I. i. p. 35.
Politician: plotter. V. i. p. 181.
Porpentine: porcupine. I. v. p. 64.
Posset: curdle. I. v. p. 66.
Posy: poetical motto inscribed on a ring. III. ii. p. 120.
Powers: army. IV. iv. p. 155.

Glossary

Practice: plot, conspiracy. IV. vii. p. 172. See *Uncharge*.
Precedent: former. III. iv. p. 141.
Pregnant: alert, ready. III. ii. p. 116.
Prenominate: before mentioned. II. i. p. 74.
Pressure: impress. III. ii. p. 114.
Prevent: forestall. II. ii. p. 91.
Primy: early. I. iii. p. 52.
Process: "forged ——"; lying statement. I. v. p. 64.
Process: [illegible]
Proper: very. V. ii. p. 194.
Proposer: [illegible] eloquent speaker. II. ii. p. 91.
Pursy: pampered. III. iv. p. 143.
Push: proof. V. i. p. 191.
Put on: impressed upon. I. iii. p. 56; put to the test. V. ii. p. 210.
Quaintly: skilfully. II. i. p. 74.
Quality: [illegible]
Quantity: "holds ——"; keep [illegible] III. [illegible] 121.
Quarry: dead game. V. ii. p. 208.
Questionable: question provoking. I. iv. p. 60.
Quest-law: inquest-law. V. i. p. 179.
Quick: alive. V. i. p. 183.
Quiddits: subtle and frivolous distinctions. V. i. p. 182.
Quillets: [illegible]
Quit: requite. V. ii. p. 195.
Quoted: noted, observed. II. i. p. 77.
Rack: mass of clouds. II. ii. p. 99.
Ranker: [illegible] IV. iv. p. 155.
Rankly: abominably. I. v. p. 65.
Razed: slashed. III. ii. p. 126.
Reach: capability. II. i. p. 75.
Recks: "—— not"; cares nothing for. I. iii. p. 54.
Recorder: a reed musical instrument. III. ii. p. 129.
Rede: counsel, advice. I. iii. p. 54.
Reechy: foul. III. iv. p. 145.
Reels: dances. I. iv. p. 58.
Regards: terms. II. ii. p. 82.
Relative: certain, definite. II. ii. p. 104.
Relish of: remember the taste of. III. i. p. 110.
Remiss: careless. IV. vii. p. 175.
Remorse: pity. II. ii. p. 99.
Replication: answer. IV. ii. p. 150.
Resolutes: roughs, dare-devils. I. i. p. 37.
Resolve: dissolve. I. ii. p. 46.
Respect: consideration. III. i. p. 108.
Retrograde: [illegible]
Re-word: [illegible] III. iv. p. 143.
Rivals: comrades. I. i. p. 32.
Romage: disturbance. I. i. p. 37.
Rood: cross. III. iv. p. 137.
Rosemary: a herb, used at weddings and funerals as a [illegible] IV. v. p. 165.
Round: [illegible] II. ii. p. 84.
Rouse: revelry. I. ii. p. 45.
Row: column: old ballads were frequently printed in double columns. II. ii. p. 96.
Rub: difficulty, obstruction; a term in the game of bowls. III. i. p. 108.
Rue: [illegible] of repentance. IV. v. p. 166.
Sallets: relishes, pungent sentences. II. ii. p. 97.
Salt wash: the sea. III. ii. p. 121.
Sans: without. III. iv. p. 140.
Saws: [illegible]
'Sblood: 'God's blood'; an oath. II. ii. p. 94.
Scanned: considered. III. iii. p. 135.
School: college. I. ii. p. 45.
Sconce: head. V. i. p. 182.
Scope: the extent of my ambition. III. ii. p. 123.
Scrimers: fencers, Fr., *escrimeurs*. IV. vii. p. 174.
Scullion: lowest menial. II. ii. p. 104.

Glossary

Sea-gown: V. ii. p. 192. See Notes.
Season: restrain. I. ii. p. 48; mature. I. iii. p. 55; modify. II. i. p. 73.
Seasons: literally, 'ripens,' makes. III. ii. p. 123.
Seeming: countenance, manner. III. ii. p. 117.
Seized of: possessed of. I. i. p. 36.
Semblable: equal. V. ii. p. 197.
Senseless: inanimate. II. ii. p. 99.
Sensibly: acutely. IV. v. p. 164.
Se offendendo: 'justifiable suicide.' Clown's blunder for *se defe dendo*, 'justifiable homicide.' V. i. p. 178.
Set: regard. IV. iii. p. 154.
Shape: part, plot. IV. vii. p. 176.
Shards: broken tiles. V. i. p. 188.
Sharked up: gathered together indiscriminately. I. i. p. 37.
Sheeted: shrouded. I. i. p. 37.
Shent: shamed, rebuked. III. ii. p. 131.
Short: confined within limits. IV. i. p. 148.
Shreds and patches: motley worn by Vice, the clown of the old Morality Plays. III. iv. p. 141.
Shriving-time: time for confession. V. ii. p. 193.
Siege: rank. IV. vii. p. 172.
Simple: foolish, weak. I. ii. p. 44.
Simples: herbal remedies. IV. vii. p. 176.
Sith: since. IV. iv. p. 156.
Skirts: borders. I. i. p. 36.
Slander: abuse, waste. I. iii. p. 58.
Sledded: used to express 'born on a sledge.' I. i. p. 35.
Sliver: young branch. IV. vii. p. 177.
So: such. III. i. p. 108.
Soft! hush! III. i. p. 109.
Softly: slowly. IV. iv. p. 154.
Soil: stain. I. iv. p. 59.
Sole: only. III. iii. p. 135.
Solicited: happened. V. ii. p. 208.
Sometimes: some time, formerly. I. i. p. 34.
Sort: concur. I. i. p. 37; associate. II. ii. p. 90.
Sovereignty: "deprive your —— of reason"; overthrow your power of reason. I. iv. p. 61.
Splenitive: passionate. V. i. p. 189.
Springes: traps. I. iii. p. 57.
Spurns: disdainful rejection. III. i. p. 108; kicks. IV. v. p. 157.
Star: sphere. II. ii. p. 84.
Station: posture, attitude. III. iv. p. 139.
Statists: statesmen. V. ii. p. 193.
Stay: wait for. V. ii. p. 192.
Stayed: waited. I. iii. p. 54.
Stays: awaits me. III. iii. p. 135.
Stay upon: await. III. ii. p. 118.
Stick fiery off: show up brilliantly. V. ii. p. 203.
Stiffly: stoutly. I. v. p. 67.
Still: always. I. i. p. 37.
Stithy: forge or smithy. III. ii. p. 117.
Stomach: courage. I. i. p. 37.
Stoup: flagon. V. i. p. 180.
Straight: immediately. II. ii. p. 97.
Stranger: "as a ——"; as you would welcome a stranger, without doubting or questioning. I. v. p. 71.
Strewments: spreading of flowers over the bier and grave. V. i. p. 188.
Strike: blast, destroy. I. i. p. 39.
Stuck: thrust. Italian *stoccata*. IV. v. p. 176.
Subject: subjects, populace. I. i. p. 35.
Succession: future. II. ii. p. 94.
Suddenly: forthwith. II. ii. p. 88.
Sullies: disgraces. II. i. p. 74.
Supervise: perusal. V. ii. p. 192.
Suppliance: pleasure. I. iii. p. 62.
Supply: help. II. ii. p. 79.

Glossary

Supposal: supposition, estimation. I. ii. p. 41.
Swoopstake: sweepstake. IV. v. p. 164.
'Swounds: 'God's wounds', an oath. II. ii. p. 103.
Swounds: swoons. V. ii. p. 205.
Table: tablet. I. v. p. 67.
Tables: tablets, note-book. I. v. p. 67.
Taints: faults. II. i. p. 74.
Takes: casts spells. I. i. p. 39.
Take you: assume. II. i. p. 73.
Tardy: tardily, unsuccessfully. III. ii. p. 114.
Tarre: urge, incite. II. ii. p. 94.
Taxed: satirised, ridiculed. I. iv. p. 59.
Tell: count. I. ii. p. 51.
Tempered: mixed, compounded. V. ii. p. 206.
Temple: the body. I. iii. p. 52.
Tend: wait. IV. iii. p. 153.
Tender: esteem, value. I. iii. p. 57.
Tenders: promises. I. iii. p. 56.
Tent: probe. II. ii. p. 104.
Tetter: cutaneous disease. I. v. p. 66.
That: what. II. ii. p. 78.
Thews: sinews. I. ii. p. 52.
Thinking: "not —— on"; being forgotten. III. ii. p. 119.
Thought: anxiety. IV. v. p. 166.
Thought-sick: overcome with tribulation. III. iv. p. 139.
Thrift: advantage. III. ii. p. 116.
Throughly: thoroughly. IV. v. p. 164.
Tickled o' the sere: easily provoked to laughter. II. ii. p. 92
Tinct: dye, stain. III. iv. p. 140.
Toils: compels to toil. I. i. p. 35.
Touched: responsible. IV. v. p. 167.
Toward: forthcoming. I. i. p. 36.
Toy in blood: a light, fleeting emotion. I. iii. p. 52.
Toys: whims. I. iv. p. 61.
Trade: business. III. ii. 128.
Translate: transform. III. i. p. 110.
Trick: whim, fancy. IV. iv. p. 157.
Trick: natural habit. IV. vii. p. 177; insight. V. i. p. 182.
Tricked: decked out, blazoned. Heraldic term. II. ii. p. 98.
Tristful: sorrowful. III. iv. p. 139.
Tropically: metaphorically. III. iii. p. 124.
Truant: idle, wandering. I. ii. p. 47; idler. I. ii. p. 48.
True-penny: an honest fellow.
Turn Turk: 'go to the dogs.' III. ii. p. 126.
Tyrannically: uproariously. II. ii. p. 93.
Umbrage: shadow. V. ii. p. 197.
Unaneled: without having received Extreme Unction. I. v. p. 66.
Unbated: unblunted; *i.e.*, with the button detached from the point. IV. vii. p. 175.
Unbraced: unfastened. II. i.
Uncharge the practice: refrain from recognising the plot. IV. vii. p. 172.
Undergo: endure, attain to. I. iv. p. 59.
Unequal: unequally. II. ii. p. 98.
Ungalled: unwounded. II. ii. p. 126.
Ungored: unstained. V. ii. p. 202
Unhouseled: without having received the Eucharist. I. v. p. 66.
Unimproved: inexperienced, untried. I. i. p. 36.
Union: a pearl of unique beauty and value. V. ii. p. 203.
Unkennel: reveal itself. III. ii. p. 117.
Unmastered: uncontrolled. I. iii. p. 53.
Unpregnant of: regardless of. II. ii. p. 103.
Unprevailing: unavailing. I. ii. p. 45.
Unreclaimed: untamed. II. i. p. 74.
Unshaped: disordered. IV. v. p. 158.

Glossary

Unsifted: inexperienced, untested. I. iii. p. 56.

Unsinewed: "much ——"; very feeble, quite insufficient. IV. vii. p. 169.

Unvalued: common, lowly born. I. iii. p. 53.

Unwrung: unstrained, unaffected. III. ii. p. 124.

Upon: to the minute of. I. i. p. 32.

Upon: "Does it not stand me now ——?" Is it not incumbent upon me now? V. ii. p. 194.

Up-spring reel: a German dance of a very quick and boisterous character. I. iv. p. 58.

Vailed lids: downcast eyelids. I. ii. p. 43.

Valanced: fringed with a beard. II. ii. p. 96.

Validity: vitality, durability. III. ii. p. 122.

Vantage: "of ——"; advantageously (being concealed). III. iii. p. 133.

Ventages: air-holes in a wood-wind instrument. III. ii. p. 129.

Vice: the clown in old Morality Plays. III. iv. p. 141.

Videlicit: namely. II. i. p. 75.

Vigour: "sudden ——"; quick and powerful activity. I. v. p. 66.

Violets: symbol of faithfulness. IV. v. p. 166.

Virtue: function, power. IV. v. p. 165.

Voice: "have a ——"; am advised. V. ii. p. 202.

Wake: hold late revelry. I. iv. p. 58.

Wandering stars: planets in distinction from fixed stars. V. i. p. 189.

Wanned: blanched. II. ii. p. 102.

Wanton: wantonly. III. iv. p. 145; weakling, mere boy. V. ii. p. 205.

Wantonness: pretences. III. i. p. 111.

Wassail: carousal, revelry. I. iv. p. 58.

Watch: sleepless condition. II. ii. p. 85.

Waves: beckons. I. iv. p. 61.

Weeds: garments. IV. vii. p. 173.

Well-took: well executed. II. ii. p. 82.

Wharf: shore. I. v. p. 164.

Wheel: burden (of the song). IV. v. p. 165.

Wholesome: sensible. III. ii. p. 127.

Wildness: insanity. III. i. p. 107.

Will: intention. I. iii. p. 53.

Windlases: circuitous methods. II. i. p. 75.

Winking: wilfully overlooking. II. ii. p. 84.

Winnowed: effeminate. V. ii. p. 200.

Withdraw: speak privately. III. ii. p. 129.

Withers: the junction of the shoulder-bones of a horse, forming an elevation at the bottom of the neck and mane. III. ii. p. 124.

Wittenberg: an anachronism, the university was not founded till 1502. I. ii. p. 45.

Wonder-wounded: transfixed with amazement. V. i. p. 189.

Woo't: wouldst thou. V. i. p. 190.

Word: watchword. I. v. p. 67.

Worlds: "both the ——"; here and hereafter. IV. v. p. 163.

Woundless: invulnerable. IV. i. p. 149.

Wretch: used as a term of endearment. II. ii. p. 86.

Yaw: stagger, deviate, move unsteadily. (A nautical expression.) V. ii. p. 197.

Yeoman's service: excellent service, as the yeoman renders to his lord. V. ii. p. 193.

Yesty: frothy. V. ii. p. 199.

Yourself: "observe his inclination in ——"; make your own observation of his conduct. II. i. p. 75.

Printed by
MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED
Edinburgh